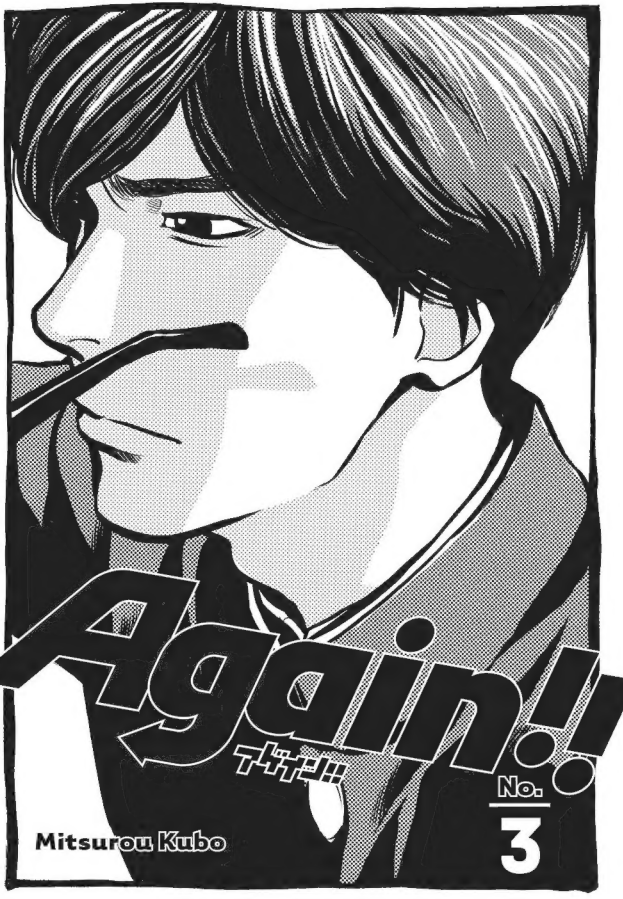
Mitsurou Kubo

No.
3

Again!!

アゲイン!!


Again!!
アゲイン!!
No.
3
Mitsurou Kubo

c o n t e n t s

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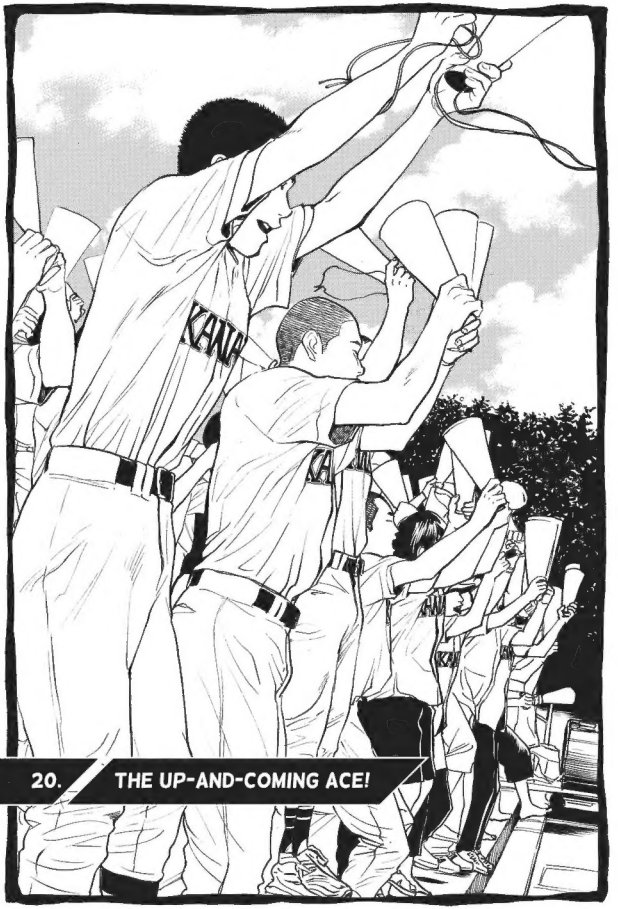


20. THE UP-AND-COMING ACE!

QUIT SLACK-ING AND SHOW ME SOME HUSTLE!
YOU'VE GOTTA BE IN SHAPE TO SERVE IN THE OUENDAN!
WHEEZE
CAN IT, WILL YA?
WHY ...
...DO WE HAVE TO RUN IN OUR BLAZ-ERS?
PANT
IT'S JUST HOW WE DO THINGS.
CLAT
CLAT
CLAT
CLAT
CLAT
CLAT
PAANT
WHEEEZE
IMA-MURA!
YOU THINK WE CAN WIN WITH YOU HALF-ASSING IT LIKE THAT?
PAANT
SHOOOOOOOOO
DOO

WHAT IS IT?
IF YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING TO SAY, THEN LET'S HEAR IT!
PANT
N-NO, MA'AM...
WHEEZE
PANT
YEAH...
...TURNS OUT SHE'S NOT MY TYPE AT ALL.
KANAAN!
GO, TEAM!
GOOO!
CLAT
CLAT
CLAT

WE'LL ALL LOOK BAD IF YOU CAN'T EVEN KEEP UP WITH THE BASEBALL TEAM!
GO PASS THOSE GUYS!
NOT GONNA HAPPEN.
GOOO!
GO, TEAM!
WOBBLE
WOBBLE
SMACK
SMACK
CLAT
CLAT
CLAT
PAT

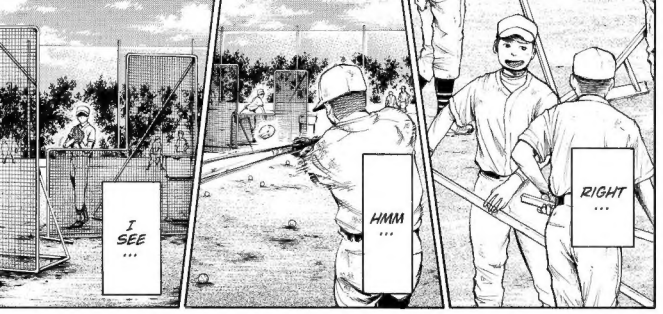
HEY!
IMA-MURA.
LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE GOING HARD.
HUH?

WHO'S THIS GUY, AGAIN?
HE DOESN'T EXACTLY HAVE THE MOST MEMORABLE FACE...
SEE YA.
TETRA TOT
OH YEAH!
WAS THAT A FRIEND OF YOURS?

NO, WE AREN'T FRIENDS.
HE'S THIS GUY IN MY CLASS, SUZUKI.
IT'S NOT LIKE WE EVER TALKED DURING THE THREE YEARS BEFORE I STARTED DOING THINGS OVER AGAIN.
AND HE'S NOT EXACTLY THE KIND OF GUY I'D BE FRIENDS WITH. BUT...

I DO REMEMBER THAT HE QUIT THE BASEBALL TEAM NOT TOO FAR INTO OUR FIRST YEAR.
YEAH, IT'S JUST NOT HEALING FOR SOME REASON.
DOES YOUR KNEE STILL HURT, SUZUKI? I HEAR YOU HAVEN'T BEEN GOING TO PRACTICE.
ARE YOU OKAY?
I MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO MAKE THE SUMMER CHAMPIONSHIP.
Damn, that sounds rough.
OH, THAT MUST BE HIM!
I HEARD THERE'S THIS FIRST-YEAR WHO'S AN AMAZING PITCHER.
HEY!
RUN, DAMN IT!
THEY SAY HE CAN THROW ANY PITCH!
YEAH?
LET'S GO WATCH HIM PRACTICE LATER!
COME TO THINK OF IT...
...I GUESS HE HASN'T MESSED UP HIS KNEE YET.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP, HERE WE COME!
KABOSU MINAMI HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL CLUB
YEEEAH!
KATIING
NATIONAL CHAMPION-SHIP, HERE WE COME?
THAT DOESN'T SOUND VERY REALISTIC.
If they're that good, it's news to me...
WHAT BETTER WAY TO INSPIRE YOUNG DREAMERS THAN AN IMPOSSIBLE GOAL?
SHUT YOUR MOUTH, CHAN-KUMA!
WE'VE GOT THE SPRING PRACTICE GAME COMING UP, SO YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO LEARN THE NAMES OF ALL OUR PLAYERS, IMAMURA.
UGGGH...
DON'T YOU "UGH" HIM!
Y'KNOW, I'M JUST NOT INTER-ESTED IN SPORTS. LIKE, AT ALL.
KATIING
I couldn't care less about baseball or whatever.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO LEARN THE RULES, BUT YOU'RE GONNA CHEER OUR PLAYERS ON, AND YOU'RE GONNA LIKE IT!
OH YEAH, LET'S JUST SCREAM OUR LUNGS OUT! I'M SURE THAT'LL DO A LOT OF GOOD.
LOOKING GOOD!
KATIING
GONNA NEED TO WORK ON THAT!


I SEE ...
HMM ...
RIGHT ...

...IT'S SORT OF IMPOSS-IBLE TO UNDER-STAND IT, HUH?
WHEN YOU'RE NOT INTER-ESTED IN SOME-THING...

THERE'S SUZUKI.
OH, HEY.
SHUP
IMA-MURA, LOOK.
HUH?
FAT FAT
FWISH FWISH
IMA-MURA, ARE YOU LISTEN-ING?
...
Yeah ...

SHWING
FWIP
WHOA!
THAT WAS SOME CURVE-BALL!
THAT WAS SO FAST!

I DON'T REALLY GET IT.
BUT I GUESS...
...SUZUKI'S REALLY GOOD?
STAAARE
FWISH!
FWISH!
LOOK AT HIM GO.
I BET HE'LL HELP US WIN A GAME OR TWO.
Uh-huh.
THIS TIME WE OUGHTA HAVE SOMETHING TO CHEER FOR.

I GET IT!
IF WE FOLLOW THE ORIGINAL TIMELINE, HE'S GOING TO INJURE HIS KNEE AND QUIT THE BASEBALL TEAM, WHICH WON'T BE ABLE TO WIN ANY GAMES WITHOUT HIM.
THAT SHOULD MEAN THAT IF I CAN MAKE SURE HE DOESN'T MESS UP HIS KNEE THIS TIME...
...OUR BASEBALL TEAM CAN WIN! RIGHT?
SUZUKI!
WAVE
WAVE
?
IMAMURA?

H-HEY...
YOUR KNEE DOESN'T HURT OR ANYTHING, DOES IT?
NO, I FEEL FINE...
OKAY, WELL...
JUST MAKE SURE NOT TO GET YOURSELF INJURED...
GAH.
AAAGH! HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO KEEP HIM FROM BUSTING HIS KNEE WHEN I DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW IT HAPPENED?
NOW HE'LL JUST THINK I'M SOME WEIRDO...
...

HEY, IMAMURA.
YOU'RE A REAL GOOD GUY.
THANKS, BUD.
I'LL BE COUNTING ON YOU TO BE THERE CHEERING ME ON.
WE BOTH GOTTA HANG IN THERE!
TOUSLE TOUSLE

JOCKS... I'LL NEVER GET USED TO THEM...
JUST 'CAUSE YOU'RE GOOD AT BASE-BALL...
It's not like we were ever close
...DOESN'T GIVE YOU THE RIGHT TO TREAT ME LIKE SOME LITTLE KID.

SU-ZU-KI!!!
YOU NEED TO QUIT GOOF-ING OFF!
SHUT UP. I'M NOT GOOF-ING OFF.
WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF PRACTICE.

IF YOU DO, AS TEAM MANAGER, I'LL BE THE ONE GIVING YOU A COLD SHOWER AND A DOSE OF REALITY!
YOU MAY BE GOOD, BUT DON'T LET IT GO TO YOUR HEAD.
Y-
WHOA.
NICE.
YOU DORK!
DON'T ACT ALL CUTESY WITH ME JUST 'CAUSE WE'RE OLD FRIENDS, MINEKO!

WHAT A LOVELY GIRL.
バイ
BOING
WOW, SHE SEEMS LIKE THE KIND OF MANAGER YOU ONLY FIND ONCE IN A DECADE.
Honestly, I get the feeling she'd have more potential than Suzuki...
OH MY GOD.
LOOK AT THAT PERFECT SPORTSBALL NORMIE.
I DON'T WANNA CHEER FOR HIM!
FEH.

DON'T TELL ME YOU TWO ARE DATING.
GAH!
W-W-W-W-WE ARE NOT DATING!
OF COURSE NOT!
HAVE SOME DISCIPLINE, AND KEEP YOUR SAPPY AFFAIRS OUT OF THE BASEBALL TEAM!
A MAN WHO ONLY WORKS TO IMPRESS SOME GIRL IS LOWER THAN DIRT!

MARK MY WORDS!
OKAY, LISAMI, TIME TO GO!
LET'S GET MOVING.
A FLIRTY MANAGER IS THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL!
YOU BETTER NOT LET YOUR GUARD DOWN AROUND HER IF YOU WANNA WIN!
WELL, SEE YA.

YEAH, SEE YOU TOMORROW!
Let me go!

IT'S A GOOD THING YOU AND ME REALLY ARE JUST FRIENDS, SUZUKI.
Y-YEAH...
Good morning!
CHIRP.
CHIRP.

I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT HOW WE CAN CHANGE THINGS FOR THE BASEBALL TEAM.
TAP TAP TAP
MORNING, IMAMURA!
OH.
YEAH, I ALREADY TOOK CARE OF THAT.
DAMN, THAT WAS FAST!
I GUESS YOU KNEW, SINCE YOU WERE IN THE SAME CLASS, HUH?
UH-HUH. SUZUKI, RIGHT?
EVERYONE SAYS OUR TEAM CAN WIN, ASSUMING HE DOESN'T QUIT THE CLUB.
SO, I GAVE HIM A WARNING.
I wanna go back to bed...
WAIT.
YOU SERIOUSLY ALREADY WARNED HIM? HOW'D THAT GO?
HE DIDN'T FREAK OUT?
YOU'RE SO COLD!
NOT REALLY ?
?
HEEEY! IMA-MURA.
VROOM

OH, THIS?
I JUST COULDN'T GET OUT OF THE WAY IN TIME WHEN A BALL CAME FLYING AT ME DURING PRACTICE YESTERDAY.
WHAT THE HELL? YOU'RE INJURED!
SUZUKI!
Hup..
O-OH YEAH?
IT WON'T KEEP ME FROM MAKING OUR NEXT GAME.
ANYWAY, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. THIS IS NO BIG DEAL. I'LL BE BACK TO NORMAL IN NO TIME.
HUH?

WASN'T HE SUPPOSED TO GET INJURED SO BAD HE HAD TO QUIT BASEBALL?
It was so weird. Are you some kind of fortune teller?
It happened right after you gave me that warning yesterday
BWA HA HA HA HA

?
RELATION-SHIPS JUST HAPPEN. THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT.
DON'T GET TOO DOWN, OKAY?
SUZU-KI-

HUH?
IT'S NOT THAT UNCOMMON FOR A TEAM'S CAPTAIN TO END UP GOING OUT WITH THE MANAGER.
I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU WARNED HIM, IMAMURA.
WHAT?
WAIT.
FUJIEDA, WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I DON'T GET IT.
YEAH, I TOLD HIM NOT TO GET INJURED!

BUT HE LOST IT WHEN HE FOUND OUT THE BASE-BALL CLUB'S MANAGER WAS DATING THE CAPTAIN OF THE TEAM.
VROOOM
HIS INJURY WASN'T EVEN THAT SERIOUS.
HONK HOOONK

THAT TAXI DRIVER NEEDS TO WATCH WHERE HE'S GOING.
GOD.
KOFF
KOFF
EEP!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING ?!
CAPTAIN ?!

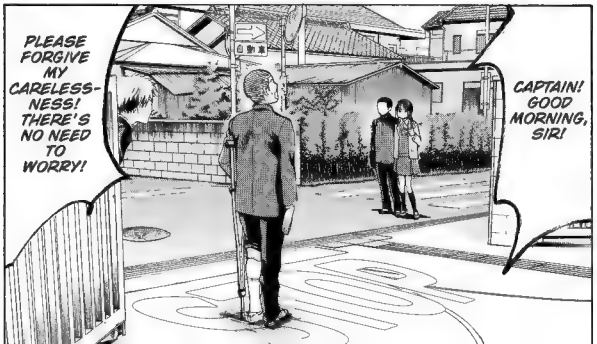
CLATTER
GASP
SUZUKI
SO. UHH

WHY DO I EVEN PLAY BASE-BALL?
I'M SO FULL OF IT.
WOW.
HA HA HA ...
I'M SUCH A CHUMP ...

YEAH, I WONDER WHAT YOU HAVE YOU TOOK CARE OF THAT
THIS LOOKS BAD, FUJIEDA! HE LEFT OUT HIS HEART SMASHED TO PIECES.

21.
RUNAWAY LOVE TRAIN

DOES YOUR KNEE STILL HURT?
HUH?
WHAT'S THE MATTER, SUZUKI?
SUZUKI.
GASP!!!

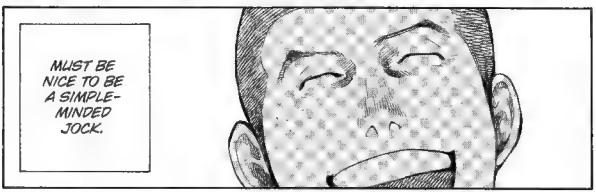

PLEASE FORGIVE MY CARELESS-NESS! THERE'S NO NEED TO WORRY!
CAPTAIN! GOOD MORNING, SIR!

SPARKLE
SPARKLE
WE'VE GOT A LOT RIDING ON YOU.
ARE YOU STILL GONNA BE ABLE TO PLAY IN THE SPRING PRACTICE GAME?
LET ME KNOW IF THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN DO TO HELP.
I AM YOUR MANAGER, AFTER ALL!
OH! HOW ABOUT I MAKE A SPECIAL LUNCH JUST FOR YOU? I BET YOU'D LIKE THAT.

WHY WOULD I WANNA EAT YOUR LOUSY COOKING? HAH! I'D PROBABLY JUST GET FOOD POISONING LIKE WE ALL DID BACK IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.
YOU ASS! IT WASN'T MY FAULT SOME OF THE FOOD WAS EXPIRED! I'M A REALLY GOOD COOK, THESE DAYS!
HEY, FUJI-EDA.
WHAT'S SUP-POSED TO HAPPEN WITH SUZUKI, ANYWAY?
BLUUSH
Y-
YOU DORK!
HA HA HA HA HA! OH, YOU TWO.
WELL ...

APPARENTLY, HIS KNEE HEALED PRETTY QUICKLY, BUT HE ENDED UP ACTING LIKE IT WAS MORE SERIOUS, AND QUITTING THE BASEBALL TEAM.
BEFORE WE STARTED DOING THINGS OVER AGAIN, PEOPLE FOUND OUT THAT THE MANAGER SUZUKI LIKES WAS DATING THE CAPTAIN OF THE TEAM PRETTY EARLY ON. SO, SINCE HE GOT HIS HEART BROKEN BEFORE HE EVEN HAD THE CHANCE TO TELL HER HOW HE FELT, SUZUKI LOST HIS WILL TO KEEP GOING.
MAYBE I SHOULD'VE TOLD HER HOW I FELT WHEN I HAD THE CHANCE.
AW, HELL.
I OVER-HEARD HIM AT OUR GRAD-UATION ...
YOU'RE JUST FULL OF INFO.
THAT'S WHAT HE SAID. I GUESS HE NEVER REALLY GOT OVER IT.
WAIT, SO THAT MUST MEAN...
...SUZUKI STILL HASN'T FIGURED IT OUT, RIGHT?

COME ON, IMA-MURA!
DON'T SCARE ME LIKE THAT!
GLOMP
?!
YOU HAD ME GOING THERE FOR A MINUTE!
YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE WHAT I THOUGHT I SAW!
BY THE WAY,
CARRY MY BAG FOR ME, WILL YA?
WHY SHOULD I?!
OH, MY GOD... HE'S JUST PRETENDING HE DIDN'T SEE IT!


MUST BE NICE TO BE A SIMPLE-MINDED JOCK.

HEEEY!
IMA-MURA!
HEY,
DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS TRANS-LATES TO?
IMA-MURA?
WHAT-CHA LISTEN-ING TO,
FANCY SEEING YOU HERE, IMA-MURA.
IMA-MURA.
HEY, IMA-MURA.

IMA-MURA!
WHAT NOW?!
WE'RE NOT FRIENDS!
SINCE WHEN DID YOU AND SUZUKI-KUN BECOME FRIENDS?
IMA-MURA.
YOU SHOULD EAT LUNCH WITH HIM SOME-TIME.
SEE?
GO TALK TO HIM, IMA-MURA.
AIN'T THAT SWEET. YOU FOUND YOURSELF A GUY FRIEND!
YOU GOT A MIN-UTE?
くい
POINK
THERE'S SOME-THING I WANNA TALK TO YOU ABOUT.
MY MALE CLASSMATES HAVE ASKED ME TO RUN ERRANDS OR DO FAVORS FOR THEM IN THE PAST.
BUT BESIDES THAT, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE ONE OF THEM HAS TALKED TO ME.

OH, JOY. YOU HAVE A CRUSH. HOW THRILLING.
I HAD A CRUSH ON HER.
BE-FORE I KNEW IT.
I THINK SHE FEELS THE SAME WAY.
MINEKO AND I FIRST MET WHEN WE WERE IN LITTLE LEAGUE.
SHE WAS ALWAYS SO CUTE, BUT SPUNKY, TOO...

UHHH... WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THAT?
I MEAN, SHE'S ALWAYS SO FLIRTY WITH ME! LIKE, THE OTHER DAY SHE SAID SHE WANTED ME TO TAKE HER TO THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP AT KOSHIEN!
NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP HERE WE COME! Mineko
AND SHE USED TO SAY STUFF LIKE, "I KNOW YOU'RE GONNA BE A PRO ONE DAY, SO LET'S GET MARRIED!" SHE WAS MESSING AROUND, BUT KNOWING MY MINEKO, I'M SURE SHE MEANT IT! ♥
...HOW OLD WERE YOU GUYS AT THE TIME?
WE WERE EIGHT!

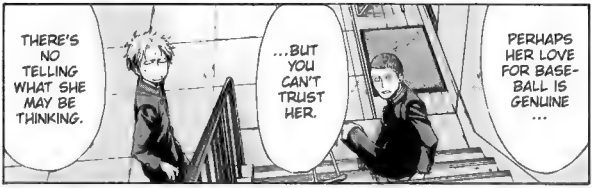
SO, YOU REALLY THINK THERE'S NOTHING GOING ON...
GRR
MRR
...BE-TWEEN THE CAPTAIN AND THIS MINEKO CHICK?
GRR
I THINK SHE WAS TESTING ME BY CHOOSING A HIGH SCHOOL WITH A LOUSY BASEBALL TEAM LIKE THIS ONE.
God, I couldn't believe it.
I had to study so hard to get in here.
SHE JUST DOESN'T WANNA ADMIT THAT SHE HAS FEELINGS FOR ME, SO SHE'S WAITED ALL THIS TIME FOR ME TO ASK HER OUT.

SURE, SHE ENJOYS TALKING ABOUT THE GAME WITH THE CAPTAIN, BUT THERE'S NOTHING MORE TO IT THAN THAT!
THERE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A LOT OF GUYS WHO MISTOOK HER FOR BEING INTO THEM, BUT SHE JUST REALLY LOVES BASEBALL AND WANTS TO DO THE BEST JOB SHE CAN!
OOH...
IT'S EASY TO GET THE WRONG IDEA WITH MINEKO, BUT I'M TELLING YOU, MAN! SHE JUST LIKES WHEN GUYS FAWN OVER HER!
I SHOULD KNOW!
I SHOULD KNOW!
UH-OH...

HUH ?!
OH.
UH, WELL...
TWITCH
WHAT DO YOU THINK, IMAMURA?
I'M THINKING MAYBE I SHOULD TELL HER HOW I FEEL.
BUT I CAN'T STAND TO KEEP MINEKO WAITING ANY LONGER!
I KNOW I SHOULD BE FOCUSING ON BASEBALL,
REALLY ...

I THINK I'VE HEARD ENOUGH.
HOW I'D LIKE TO MAKE HIM SUFFER.
I WANNA HURT HIM SO BAD...
?
THIS MEATHEAD'S SUCH AN OPTIMIST.

GIVE UP ON THAT GIRL.
SHE'S NOT GOOD FOR YOU.
DUN...
CAPTAIN USAMI?!


THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT SHE MAY BE THINKING.
...BUT YOU CAN'T TRUST HER.
PERHAPS HER LOVE FOR BASEBALL IS GENUINE ...

YOU'LL NEVER AMOUNT TO ANYTHING IF YOU LET YOURSELF BE LED ASTRAY BY A BIG-BREASTED VIXEN LIKE HER!
OPEN YOUR EYES!
IN FACT, IT WOULD BE AN ABDICATION OF HER DUTY AS MANAGER IF SHE DIDN'T!
SHE'S PROBABLY ASKED EVERY MEMBER OF THE CLUB TO TAKE HER TO THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP!

MINEKO ISN'T THAT KIND OF GIRL!
WHAT DO YOU KNOW ?!
SHE'S EXACTLY THAT KIND OF GIRL...
Son of a—!
HE CALLS HER BY HER FIRST NAME ?!
YOU CAN'T TRUST A MAN WHO GETS "THAT" FAMILIAR WITH WOMEN.
THERE'S NO BIGGER WASTE OF TIME THAN OBSESSING OVER MISUNDERSTANDINGS.
AND THERE'S NO BETTER WAY OF ENSURING THEM THAN HOPING THAT SOMEONE WILL KNOW HOW YOU FEEL WITHOUT YOU HAVING TO TELL THEM!
WHAT'S WITH SUZUKI? HE LOOKS LOST IN THOUGHT...
STEW STEW STEW STEW STEW STEW STEW

SUZUKI ...?
WHERE IS HE GOING?
CLAT
CLAT
DIING
DIIING
DOOONG
DOOONG
...
THEY'RE HEADING UP TO THE ROOF, AREN'T THEY?
TRA TOT
"MAYBE I SHOULD'VE TOLD HER HOW I FELT WHEN I HAD THE CHANCE.'"
"THAT'S WHAT I HEARD HIM SAYING."
IF SUZUKI'S GONNA CONFESS TO HER THIS TIME AROUND...

...WHAT ELSE IS THAT GONNA CHANGE?
SO, WHAT IS IT YOU WANTED TO TALK TO ME ABOUT UP HERE?
WE'VE GOTTTA GET TO PRACTICE.
I...
WELL...
UH...

Hmm?

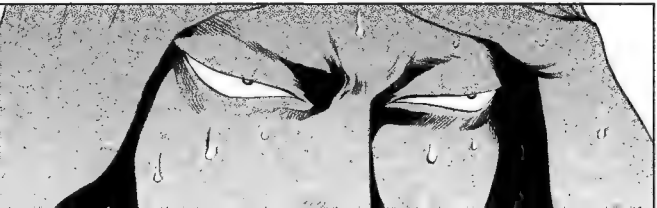
I LIKE YOU, MINEKO.
I'VE ALWAYS LIKED YOU.
I WAS HOPING YOU'D GO OUT WITH ME.

BUUUSH
I'M FLAT-TERED ...
BOW
BUT I'M SORRY!
I'M ALREADY GOING OUT WITH THE CAPTAIN!
KASHINK

WOBBLE
WOBBLE
WOBBLE
WOBBLE
YOU KNEW ...
DIDN'T YOU?
IMA-MURA ...
SUZU-KI...
WHAT ARE YOU SUPPOSED TO SAY AT A TIME LIKE THIS?
UHH ...
W-
WE'RE STILL FRIENDS.
KASHINK
RIGHT.
I SEE.
SORRY.
THIS WAS WEIRD OF ME.
LET'S NOT LET THIS HURT OUR FRIEND-SHIP!
KASHINK
あ女
女
AAAAAGH
KASHINK
BUT I'M ONLY TELLING YOU THAT BECAUSE WE'RE SUCH GOOD FRIENDS, SUZUKI!
OH!
DON'T TELL ANYONE ELSE, OKAY?
KASHINK

I KNEW SHE HAD TO BE SCREWING THE CAPTAIN!
SEE?
YOU'RE BETTER OFF WITHOUT HER.
KABOOOM!!!

HIS FRAGILE BRAIN COULDN'T HANDLE THE STRESS...
OH GOD ...
THE NEXT DAY..
LOOKS LIKE SUZUKI'S ABSENT TODAY.



Hey, it's Imamura. Sorry to text you out of nowhere. You feeling okay?
Send.
OH! HE RE-PLIED.
DOES ANYBODY KNOW SUZUKI'S NUMBER?
HEY.
Re:
I wanna die.
GAH!
WHOA!
SUZUKI WANTS TO DIE?! WHY?!
WHAT?
CHATTER
SUZUKI SAID THAT?
HE DID LOOK LIKE HE WAS THINKING REALLY HARD ABOUT SOMETHING YESTER-DAY.
CHATTER

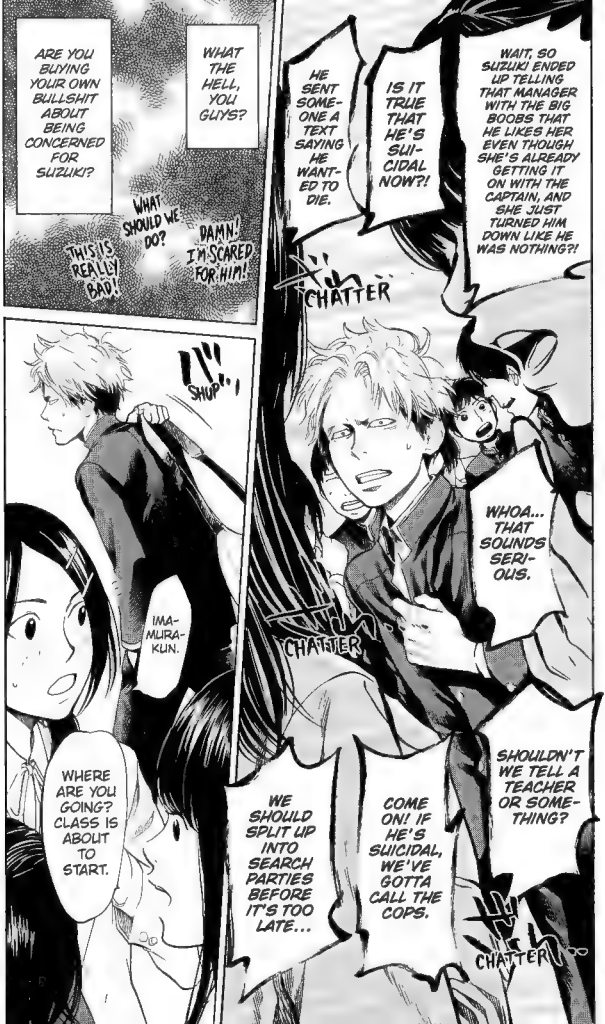
NO, NO. IT'S JUST, YOU SEE...
HE GOT REJECTED BY THIS GIRL YESTERDAY.
HUH?!
WHO'D HE GET REJECTED BY?!
EMA! COULD YOU KEEP IT DOWN?
CHATTER
IT WAS THE BASEBALL CLUB'S MANAGER-
OHHH, THAT GIRL WITH THE GIANT BOOBS?
WHOA
DIDN'T SOMEONE SAY THEY'D SEEN HER OUT ON A DATE WITH THE CAPTAIN?
OH.
UH-OH.
WE'VE GOTTA GO CHECK ON HIM!
わぁぁぁ

Would you throw me an inside pitch? ♥
Oh, senpai... I'm ready to play ball ♥
Ah! ♥
Senpai.. ♥

UNH...
THIS GIRL LOOKS SO MUCH LIKE MINEKO ...
OH ...

UNH
I JUST WANNA DIE.
I DON'T WANNA GO TO SCHOOL.
GOD.

22.
HEAVY ROTATION


WHERE ARE YOU GOING? CLASS IS ABOUT TO START.
IMAMURA-KUN.
SHUP!
WE SHOULD SPLIT UP INTO SEARCH PARTIES BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE...
COME ON! IF HE'S SUICIDAL, WE'VE GOTTA CALL THE COPS.
SHOULDN'T WE TELL A TEACHER OR SOMETHING?
CHATTER...
WHOA... THAT SOUNDS SERIOUS.
CHATTER
HE SENT SOMEONE A TEXT SAYING HE WANTED TO DIE.
IS IT TRUE THAT HE'S SUICIDAL NOW?!
WAIT, SO SUZUKI ENDED UP TELLING THAT MANAGER WITH THE BIG BOOBS THAT HE LIKES HER EVEN THOUGH SHE'S ALREADY GETTING IT ON WITH THE CAPTAIN, AND SHE JUST TURNED HIM DOWN LIKE HE WAS NOTHING?!
CHATTER
ARE YOU BUYING YOUR OWN BULLSHIT ABOUT BEING CONCERNED FOR SUZUKI?
WHAT THE HELL, YOU GUYS?
WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
DAMN! I'M SCARED FOR HIM!
THIS IS REALLY BAD!

I'M GONNA ASK A TEACHER FOR SUZUKI'S ADDRESS AND GO PAY HIM A VISIT.
IF HE CAN TEXT ME BACK WITH "I WANNA DIE" THAT FAST, HE'S NOT ACTUALLY DYING ANYTIME SOON.
AND YOU GUYS SHOULDN'T BE HAVING THIS MUCH FUN WITH THIS!
WHAM
SH.
GOD...

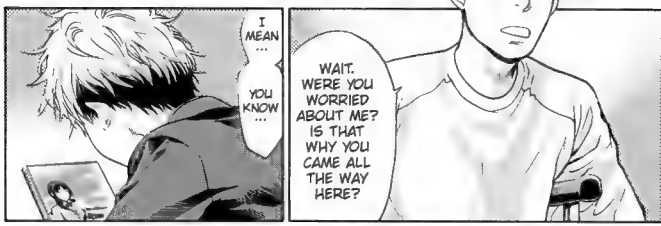
Re:
I wanna die.
HE IS A STUPID JOCK, THOUGH...
HE BETTER NOT TRY ANYTHING CRAZY!

SUZUK
DING-
DONG
DING-
DONG
PANT
PANT
PANT
CHACK
BAM...
SUZUKI
...
?!
PANT
DING-
DONG
DING-
DONG
BAM
BAM
SU-
ZU-
KI!
BAM
BAM
ARE
YOU
IN
THERE
?
SUZUKI,
IT'S
ME!
IMA-
MURA!
CREAK

GAH.

DON'T JUST LET YOUR-SELF IN!
AUGH WAIT!
SLAM
LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE FEELING FINE TO ME...

YOU DON'T GET IT! I WANNA DIE SO BAD THAT THIS WAS MY ONLY ALTER-NATIVE!
Senpai...
Get it on the inside corner.
Ah!
YOU WERE JUST SKIPPING SCHOOL TO WATCH PORN? SO MUCH FOR WANTING TO DIE.


I MEAN...
YOU KNOW...
WAIT. WERE YOU WORRIED ABOUT ME? IS THAT WHY YOU CAME ALL THE WAY HERE?

SURE. WHAT DO YOU HAVE?
WANNA READ SOME MANGA, THEN?
NO THANKS...
WANNA WATCH THAT WITH ME?

Of course!

I DON'T WANNA PLAY BASE-BALL ANY-MORE.
I WANNA DIE...
GAAAH.
I'VE NEVER DONE THIS WHOLE "HANGING OUT AT A FRIEND'S HOUSE" THING.
WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO TALK ABOUT? HELL, WE'RE NOT EVEN REALLY FRIENDS!
SPAAACE
H-U-U-U-U-S-H
IT'S NOT LIKE I HAVE ANY ADVICE FOR HIM!
WHAT'S HE WANT? WHAT AM I SUP-POSED TO DO?!
HUH? ARE YOU A FAN OF THAT MODEL, IMAMURA?
I LIKE HER, TOO. THE INNOCENT TYPES ARE THE BEST. WHAT OTHER MODELS DO YOU LIKE?
FLINCH
I NEVER SAID I LIKED HER...
UHH...
I ALSO LIKE...
ISN'T THAT HOT?
SHE'S SO CUTE.

THIS ONE'S GONNA START DOING PORN SOON.
IN THE ORIGINAL TIMELINE ...
WAIT, SERIOUSLY ?!
YOU JUST CAN'T TRUST WOMEN ...
THEY'RE ALL THE SAME.
Oh, damn it.
FLOP
I WANNA DIE... I WANNA DIE SO BAD!
GRRR

AND YOU KNOW THOSE GIRLS YOU LOVE SO MUCH? [redacted]KO AND [redacted]MI? THEY'RE GONNA BARE ALL IF YOU WAIT JUST A LITTLE LONGER. EVEN [redacted], THE FORMER [redacted], WILL!
HOW ARE YOU GONNA WATCH HER PORN IF YOU'RE DEAD?
YOU IDIOT!
How do you know that?!
ARE YOU SERIOUS?!
EVEN IF YOU QUIT BASEBALL, THERE'S PLENTY OF OTHER FUN STUFF YOU CAN DO!
AS LONG AS YOU'RE ALIVE,
THERE'LL BE STUFF LIKE THAT FOR YOU TO SEE!
...
WHAT'S THE POINT ...
NO FUN GUH
GRRRRR

BAM
DING
DONG
"GO AHEAD AND QUIT BASEBALL! I DON'T CARE!"
Maybe that's what he needs to hear.
I WANNA DIE...
GOD!
WHAT A PAIN IN THE ASS! I SHOULDN'T HAVE BOTHERED COMING! YOU DON'T ACTUALLY WANNA DIE!
WE'RE NOT EVEN FRIENDS. I WANT ALL THE TIME I'VE WASTED HERE BACK, DAMN IT!
This is pointless!

C-
CAPTAIN ...?
AND MINEKO, TOO?

HUH?!
HUH?!
EXCUSE ME?
DRIP DRIP
MINEKO TOLD ME EVERYTHING.
THERE'S BEEN AN UPROAR OVER YOUR SUICIDE NOTE.
I WANT YOU TO BEAT ME UNTIL YOU'RE SATISFIED.
FWISH
SUZUKI.

NO WAY... I'M NOT THAT DEPRESSED. I MEAN, I AM DEPRESSED, OF COURSE, BUT STILL...
ME?
SUICIDE?
God...
News traveled that fast?

I'M SORRY! I'M SO SORRY!
I WAS SO INSENSITIVE!
GLOMP
I NEVER THOUGHT YOU'D KILL YOURSELF! DON'T DO IT! YOU CAN'T!
GRAB
QUIT TRYING TO DEAL WITH EVERYTHING ON YOUR OWN!
YOU DAMN KNUCKLEHEAD!

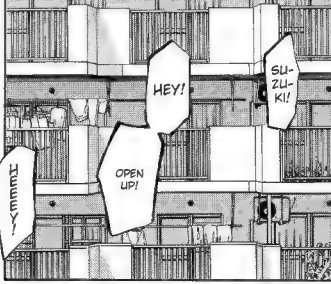
I'M SERIOUS ABOUT MY RELATION-SHIP WITH THE CAPTAIN, THOUGH. WE'RE NOT JUST HAVING SOME FLING.
I GUESS YOU PROB-ABLY DON'T WANNA SEE ME AROUND ANYMORE. BUT I CAN QUIT MY POSITION AS MANAGER IF YOU WANT!
...
YOU'VE GOTTA KEEP PLAYING BASE-BALL, SUZUKI!
AFTER ALL,
I LOVE SEEING YOU PLAY.
YOU SHOULDN'T TAKE YOUR GIFT FOR GRANTED, MAN.
HONESTLY, I'M AS JEALOUS OF YOU AS YOU ARE OF ME.
SUZUKI.
YOU WOULDN'T THROW IT ALL AWAY OVER A LITTLE THING LIKE THIS, WOULD YOU?
I BE-LIEVE IN YOU.
YOU HEAR ?
SUZUKI !
SUZUKI.
I DON'T WANT YOU TO GIVE UP ON YOUR DREAMS BECAUSE OF ME.

ARE YOU SERIOUSLY GONNA PLAY ALONG WITH THIS AFTER-SCHOOL SPECIAL?
SUZUKI.
THAT'S CRUEL!
WHAT THE HELL?!

INSTEAD, YOU'RE JUST GANGING UP ON HIM TO TELL HIM HOW SORRY YOU FEEL FOR HIM!
IF YOU LOVE SEEING SUZUKI PLAY BASEBALL SO MUCH, THEN WHY DON'T YOU BREAK UP WITH THE CAPTAIN AND LET HIM IN YOUR PANTS?
OH, I'M THE CRUEL ONE?
THIS IS HIS DECISION TO MAKE!
THAT OUGHTA CLEAR THINGS UP!
NOT ANYONE ELSE'S!
WHAM

QUIT TREATING HIM LIKE BASEBALL IS THE ONLY THING HE'S GOOD FOR!
YA JERKS!

W-
CALM DOWN, MINEKO.
WE NEVER SAID THAT!
I DON'T WANNA HEAR IT.
IF YOU WANNA GO TO THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS, YOU'LL HAVE TO GET THERE YOURSELF!
CRUMMMPLE
PLOP
PUMP
HUH?



SUZUKI WOULDN'T SET FOOT OUTSIDE HIS HOUSE...

...FOR THE REST OF THE DAY.

IT'S GONNA BE REALLY AWKWARD IF HE SHOWS UP.

I FORGOT THE WHOLE CLASS FOUND OUT ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED...

EMA! KEEP IT DOWN.
WHOA!
THERE HE IS!
CLAT
CLAT

...
UHHH, WHAT'S THE MATTER, YOU GUYS?
H.U.U.U.S.H...

WHAT ?!
THE WHOLE CLASS KNOWS ABOUT IT.
Y'KNOW HOW YOU SENT ME THAT TEXT THAT SAID, "I WANNA DIE," AFTER THE MANAGER REJECTED YOU?

AWW, COME ON, IMAMURA!
Heh...
GIVE ME A BREAK!
NOW HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO FIT IN?
Phew.
WELL,
HE'S THE SAME AS EVER.
I'M GLAD.
HELL, I NEVER HAVE FIT IN.
That's not true! Bwa ha ha ha!

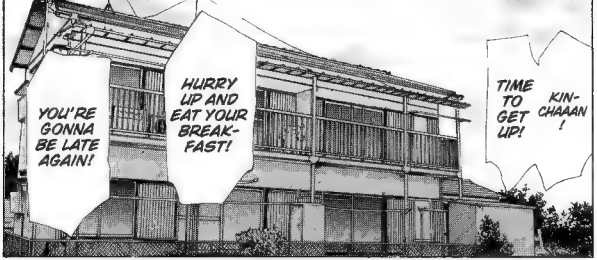
KATTING
I'LL GO GET IT!
KATTING
HEEEY! MANAGER!
COMING! BE RIGHT THERE!
HEY, SUZUKI.
WEREN'T YOU GONNA QUIT BASEBALL?
YEAH.
I REALLY WANT TO.

I'LL MAKE SURE EVERYBODY IN THE BASE-BALL CLUB IS JEALOUS OF MY LIFE IN HIGH SCHOOL.
THEN I CAN FIND SOME CHICK WITH BIG BOOBS, BLACK HAIR, AND AN INNOCENT PERSONALITY TO BE MY GIRLFRIEND. WE CAN GO ON DATES EVERY DAY.
IN FACT, MAYBE I SHOULD.
C'MON! THAT'S NOT WHAT YOU SAID BEFORE.
YOU'RE Y'KNOW, NOT GONNA BE VERY POPULAR IF YOU'RE NOT ON THE TEAM.
I GUESS YOU'RE JUST NOT VERY GOOD AT CHEERING PEOPLE UP, ARE YOU?
AND HERE I THOUGHT WHAT YOU SAID YESTERDAY WAS REALLY TOUCHING.
EXCUSE ME?
WHAT'S THAT SUP-POSED TO MEAN?

I'M GONNA PITCH IN OUR SPRING PRACTICE GAME.
AND I WANT YOU TO BE THERE CHEER-ING ME ON, IMA-MURA.
:SNIFFLE:
UUUNH
HNGH
HNGH

I WILL BE.

23. USAMI'S FEMININE SIDE


TIME TO GET UP!
KIN-CHAAAAN!
HURRY UP AND EAT YOUR BREAK-FAST!
YOU'RE GONNA BE LATE AGAIN!

GUUUUUUUU

IT'S HELL. HELL ON EARTH. AND IT'S GONNA KILL ME.
MUNCH MUNCH
UH-HUH...
IS THE OUENDAN THAT ROUGH?
YOU MUST BE TIRED WITH HOW LATE YOU'VE BEEN GETTING HOME RECENTLY. ARE YOU DOING OKAY?
UUUGH
UUUGH
HONESTLY, I'D RATHER NOT GO TO SCHOOL.
...
OMF OMF
GULP
NOM NOM

THANKS FOR BREAKFAST.
CLATTER
I GUESS I'M GOING, NOT THAT I WANT TO.
OKAY. BUH-BYE!
I AM NOT HAVING FUN!
HE MAY LIKE TO COMPLAIN,
BUT IT SOUNDS TO ME LIKE HE'S HAVING FUN.
Right, Mom?
PUSH HARDER!
YOU CALL THAT SPIRIT?!

WATCH WHERE YOU'RE GOING, CHAN-KUMA!
SMACK
IMA-MURA! I DIDN'T HEAR YOU SAY, "OSU!"
OSU!
WHEEZE
PANT
NO!
YOU SHOULD RIDE ME NEXT, CAPTAIN!

RUN!
CLAT CLAT CLAT
CLAT CLAT CLAT

JUMP!
WIPE THAT GRIN OFF YOUR FACE, CHAN-KUMA!
YES MAAM!
PUSH HARDER!
YOU PUKES AREN'T EVEN TRYING! GIVE IT ALL YOU GOT!
OSU!!
OSU!!

TIME OUT...
I CAN'T...
YOU THINK WE CAN WIN WITH THAT ATTITUDE?
KEEP GOING
GRUMBLE GRUMBLE GRUMBLE
GET UP!
WHAT WAS THAT? YOU GOT SOMETHING TO SAY? WELL, LET'S HEAR IT!

EXCESSIVE TRAINING JUST GETS POOR FORM INGRAINED IN YOUR MUSCLE MEMORY! THE FAMOUS PITCHER MASUMI KUWATA SAID IT HIMSELF!
HAVEN'T YOU EVER HEARD OF TRAINING SMARTER?
DO YOU SERIOUSLY THINK JUST PUSHING HARDER AND HARDER IS GOING TO ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING?!
FWIP!

SHUT UP!
I KNEW OUR MEN WOULDN'T RESPECT A GIRL LIKE YOU!
WE CAN'T THROW OUR TRAINING REGIMEN OUT THE WINDOW JUST 'CAUSE OF SOMETHING YOU READ ON THE INTERNET.
IMAMURA...

I JUST HAD TO GO AND MAKE THAT PROMISE TO SUZUKI...
"I WANT YOU TO BE THERE CHEERING ME ON, IMAMURA."
"I WILL BE."
IMA-MURA!
QUIT SLACKING OFF AND PUSH YOUR-SELF A LITTLE!
GRRR...
YEAH, YOU'RE ONE TO TALK! I DON'T SEE YOU DOING CRAP!
GOD.
DON'T BLAME ME!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO JOINED THE OLIENDAN, SO DO IT RIGHT. THAT'S ALL I'M SAYING!

WE MIGHT AS WELL BE PUSHING OURSELVES TO PISS INTO THE WIND FOR ALL THE GOOD WE'RE DOING!
IT'S NOT LIKE ANY OF THIS STUFF ABOUT SPIRIT OR TRA-DITION OR PUSH-ING OURSELVES IS GOING TO MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE IN HOW WELL THE BASEBALL TEAM PLAYS!

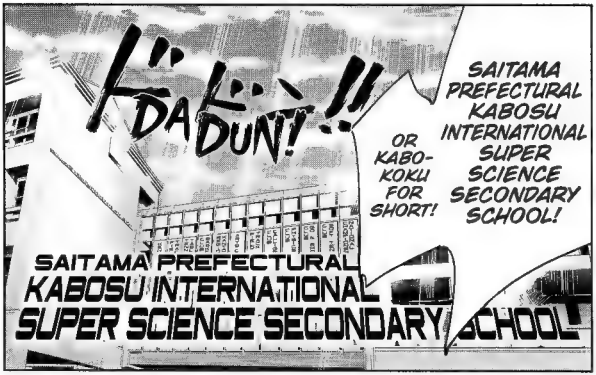
BEING TOLD TO PUSH HARDER WHEN I'M ALREADY PUSHING AS HARD AS I CAN!
BESIDES, YOU KNOW WHAT I HATE MORE THAN ANYTHING IN THE WORLD?
POINT!
PAANT
YOU'RE STILL UNHAPPY WITH HOW WE DO THINGS IN THE OUENDAN, HUH?
SO...
HOW ARE YOU SUPPOSED TO CHEER ANYONE ON WITH THAT ATTITUDE?
PAANT
HONESTLY? YEAH.
WOW, THAT WAS BLUNT.

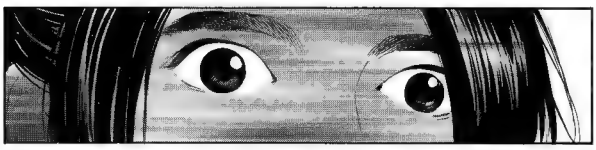
I FOUND OUT WHO WE'LL BE PLAYING AGAINST AT THE DISTRICT'S BASEBALL SPRING PRACTICE GAMES!

QUIT IT, USAMI.
YOU TWO HORSING AROUND?
HEEY!
HNNGH

FWOO!!

THE GAMES ARE SCHEDULED FOR THE FIRST WEEK OF MAY.
WE'LL PLAY AGAINST ...
NOW, NOW. SETTLE DOWN.
WHO?!


DA-DUN!!
SAITAMA PREFECTURAL KABOSU INTERNATIONAL SUPER SCIENCE SECONDARY SCHOOL!
OR KABO-KOKU FOR SHORT!
SAITAMA PREFECTURAL
KABOSU INTERNATIONAL
SUPER SCIENCE SECONDARY SCHOOL



SOUNDS LIKE THEIR BASEBALL TEAM SHOULD BE A BUNCH OF PUSH-OVERS, RIGHT?
OURS MIGHT NOT NEED MUCH CHEER-ING.
HUH?
NEVER HEARD OF 'EM.
YOU HAVEN'T?
I'M NOT FROM AROUND HERE, REMEM-BER?

HMM?
KABO-KOKU USED TO BE CALLED "KABOSU TECHNI-CAL HIGH SCHOOL."
THEY CHANGED THEIR NAME LAST YEAR.
BACK WHEN THEY WERE KABOSU TECH, THEIR BASEBALL TEAM WAS A FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH. THEY EVEN MADE IT TO KOSHIEN.
...
AND THEIR OUENDAN GOES BACK FURTHER THAN THAT OF ANY OTHER SCHOOL IN THE AREA.
THEY'RE WELL KNOWN FOR THEIR OLD-FASHIONED WAY OF DOING THINGS.
I DON'T KNOW A SINGLE SCHOOL WITH A STYLE OF CHEERING MORE TRADITIONAL THAN KABOKOKU'S!
OSU!!
IT'S VERY COOL!
OH...

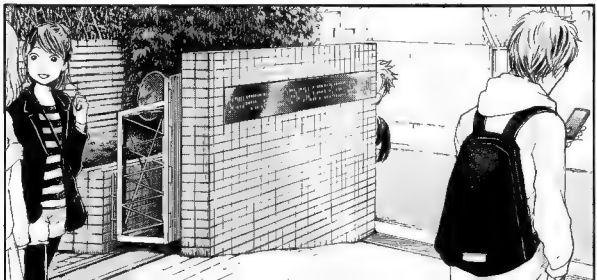
OUR OUENDAN IS PATHETIC COMPARED TO KABO-KOKU'S.
THIS IS NO TIME FOR SLACK-ING OFF.
GRRR
IF YOUR SPIRIT'S SO LIMP THAT BEING TOLD TO PUSH YOURSELF IS ALL IT TAKES TO SET YOU OFF,
WE WON'T STAND A CHANCE AGAINST THEM.
YOU ARE TO GO WATCH THEM PRAC-TICE!
YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO SUPPORT ANYONE UNTIL YOU'VE SEEN HELL WITH YOUR OWN EYES!
MRR
GRR

KABO-KOKU'S OUEN-DAN IS...
AMAZ-ING.
THEY'RE JUST ...
HMM?
OH, YEAH.

?!
I FOR-GOT.
YOU LIKE THEIR OUENDAN'S CAPTAIN, RIGHT?
D-DON'T BE RIDICU-LOUS!
I JUST RESPECT HIM AS A FELLOW OUENDAN CAPTAIN!
フルフル QUIVER QUIVER
CAP-TAIN ...
YOUR FEMININE SIDE IS SHOWING ...
ANY-WAY!
THE POINT IS, WE'VE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO BEAT KABO-KOKU!
WE CAN'T LOSE AGAIN AT THIS SPRING'S PRACTICE GAME!
WE'RE GONNA TRAIN UNTIL YOU'RE COUGH-ING UP BLOOD!
UGGGH ...
DON'T YOU "UGH" ME!

KABO-KOKU'S OUENDAN, HUH?
I WONDER WHAT THEY'RE LIKE.
They're making him run laps again
WHEEZE
PANT
HEY, IMA-MURA,
YOU'RE CURIOUS ABOUT THE CAPTAIN OF KABOKOKU'S OUENDAN, THE ONE WHO USAMI SUPPOSEDLY LIKES, AREN'T YOU?
PWINK
WHEEZE
PANT
WHEEZE
WHEEZE
WHEEZE

SAITAMA PREFECTURAL KABOSU INTERNATIONAL SUPER SCIENCE SECONDARY SCHOOL



YOU REALLY THINK WE WON'T GET CAUGHT?
IT'LL BE FINE! IT'S NOT LIKE THEY WEAR UNIFORMS HERE.

JUST LOOK AT THEM.
CAN THEIR OUENDAN REALLY BE THAT OLD-FASHIONED?
THE OUEN-DAN?
IN THE GYM.
WELL, NO ONE CAN SAY THE STUDENTS HERE AREN'T FASHION-ABLE.

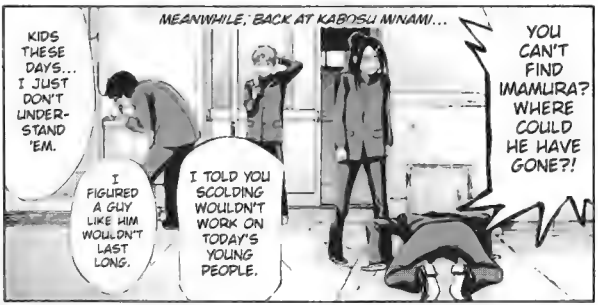
PASS IT HERE!
WHOA!
THMP
THMP
SQUEAK
SQUEAK

HEY!
GLANCE
GLANCE
IS PRAC-TICE ALREADY OVER?
HUH? I DON'T SEE THEM ...

IMA-MURA
YOU GUYS AREN'T FROM OUR SCHOOL, ARE YOU?
WHAT ARE YOU HERE FOR?
TELL ME YOUR NAMES.
DASH!
HE'S MAKING A BREAK FOR IT!

GRAB
?!
OSU!
BOW
OSU!
OSU!
BOW
BOW
BOW

CAPTAIN USAMI'S SUPPOSED TO LIKE THEIR OUENDAN'S CAPTAIN...
IS THIS HIM?


MEANWHILE, BACK AT KABOSU MINAMI...
KIDS THESE DAYS... I JUST DON'T UNDER-STAND 'EM.
I FIGURED A GUY LIKE HIM WOULDN'T LAST LONG.
I TOLD YOU SCOLDING WOULDN'T WORK ON TODAY'S YOUNG PEOPLE.
YOU CAN'T FIND IMAMURA? WHERE COULD HE HAVE GONE?!

Again!!
アゲイン!!

24. THE OUENDAN WITH THE WILD MOVES!

WE CAUGHT HIM PROWLING AROUND THE GYM. HE MIGHT BE A THIEF, OR ONE OF THOSE CREEPS WE'VE BEEN DEALING WITH LATELY!
HAS THIS GUY DONE SOMETHING HE SHOULDN'T HAVE?
SQUEEZE
LET-
OW-

WHUNK
NO, I'M NOT!

S-SORRY. ARE YOU OKAY? MY FIST JUST SORT OF SLIPPED...
...
GASP!
AGH...

DON'T PICK A FIGHT WITH THEIR CAPTAIN, YOU IDIOT!
AAAA

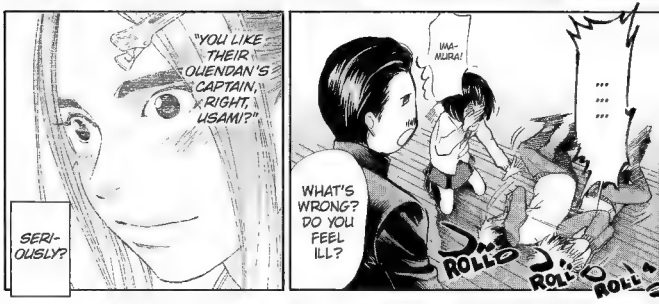
BAM
OKAY, PUNK, JUST WHO ARE YOU?

WOW, HE'S RIGHT UP IN MY FACE. IT'S LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF A COMIC BOOK! IS THIS WHAT THEY CALL A DEATH GLARE? I'VE NEVER SEEN ONE BEFORE!
THIS IS COMEDY GOLD!

THEY'RE GONNA KILL ME IF I LAUGH NOW, THOUGH.
OH DAMN, OH DAMN ... WHAT, DO THEY HAVE A RULE AGAINST SMILING?
SAY SOMETHING, DAMN IT!
AND THEY ALL LOOK SO CONSTIPATED!
HOW COULD I NOT LAUGH?!
AND I'VE NEVER SEEN SOMEONE ACTUALLY WEAR CLOTHES THIS LONG AND BAGGY!
IT'S HILARIOUS!

?!
GRAB!
HMM.
THERE'S NO BLOOD-LUST IN YOUR EYES.

PFFFT


"YOU LIKE THEIR OUENDAN'S CAPTAIN, RIGHT, USAMI?"
SERI-OUSLY?
IMA-NURA!
...
...
...
WHAT'S WRONG? DO YOU FEEL ILL?
ROLL
ROLL
ROLL

UHHH ...
WHY ARE YOU TWO HERE?
THIS IS WHAT SHE'S INTO?!

Y-YOU SEE!
WE'RE FROM THE KABOSU MINAMI SCHOOL NEWSPAPER.
HEY!
WE GOT A TIP THAT THINGS MIGHT GET PRETTY HEATED BETWEEN OUR OUENDAN AND YOURS AT THE UPCOMING BASEBALL SPRING PRACTICE GAME. WE WERE HOPING WE COULD MAKE A STORY OUT OF IT, SO WE CAME HERE TO CHECK THINGS OUT.
WE THOUGHT WE COULD SET UP A MORE FORMAL TIME TO MEET WITH YOU WHILE WE WERE HERE.
BLABBER BLABBER BLABBER...
...
BOSS?
BADUMP BADUMP
I SEE.
READY!
OSU!
CLICK
?!
HEY, WAIT! WHY'D THEY TURN OUT THE LIGHTS?
I DON'T KNOW!
I'M SCARED!
GAAAH!!
GAAAH!!

DUN!
FWISH!!
HUH?
WHAT ARE THEY DOING?
THE OUENDAN'S STARTING PRACTICE!
DA DUM
FWIP
DUM
DUM
DUM
OUENDAN

WE PRESENT KABOSU INTERNATIONAL SUPER SCIENCE SECONDARY SCHOOL'S FIRST SPIRIT SONG!
THE CHEER WILL BE LED BY...
OUR DEAR ...
OUR GLOR-IOUS ...
CAP-TAIN!
CHI-HIRO IWA-SAKI!
FORMER STUDENT OF KAWA-YAMADA MIDDLE SCHOOL!
Then dawn
ESCAPE
WHAT PRESTIGE!
OH YEAH, WHEN THEY CALL OUT THE NAME OF HIS FORMER SCHOOL,
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO RESPOND "WHAT PRESTIGE!"
UH, RIGHT ...
THEIR ATHLETIC CLUBS SEEM A LOT MORE COOPER-ATIVE THAN OURS, HUH?
YEAH ...
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP

STUDENTS OF KABOSU INTER-NATIONAL SUPER SCIENCE SECONDARY SCHOOL! LET OUR FIRST SPIRIT SONG... BEGIN!
DADUM
DUM
DUM
THMP
KABOKOKU CHEERDAN
DUM
DUM
DUM
FSSH
FSSH
DUM
DUM
DUM

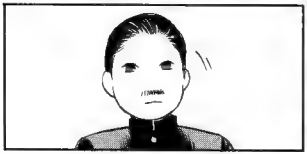
HOLY CRAP...
THEY HAVE EVERY MOVE DOWN TO A T!
SO...
...THIS IS HOW KABOKOKU'S OUENDAN CHEERS.

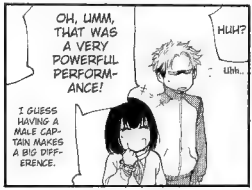
DUM
DADUM
DUM
DUM
THEY MUST SPEND SO MUCH TIME TRAINING.
...BUT THEY'RE IN A LEAGUE OF THEIR OWN.
IT'S SIMILAR TO OUR OWN STYLE...
DADUM
ARE WE SUPPOSED TO TRY TO MATCH THEIR LEVEL?
WAIT ...
"OUR OUENDAN IS WEAK AND PATHETIC COMPARED TO KABOKOKU'S!"
"THIS IS NO TIME FOR SLACKING OFF."
ONCE YOU'VE SEEN THIS, A WOMAN-LED OUENDAN JUST CAN'T COMPARE, HUH? EVEN IF YOU GUYS WERE ABLE TO DO THE SAME THING.
DADUM
DUM
...THIS IS WHAT SHE'S AIMING FOR, HUH?
SO...
I JUST RESPECT HIM AS A FELLOW OUENDAN CAPTAIN!

ISN'T OUR OUENDAN AWESOME?
CAPTAIN IWASAKI HAS THE RESPECT OF EVERY-ONE IN THE ATHLETIC CLUBS.
AFTER ALL, THERE'S NO WAY WE CAN LOSE WHEN THESE GUYS ARE PUSHING THEMSELVES SO HARD TO SUPPORT US.
HOORAY!
HIP KABO KOKU!
HIP KABO KOKU!
KABO KOKU!
KABO KOKU!
HIP KABO KOKU!

WOOOOO

DADUM
FJSH
CLAP




OH, UMM, THAT WAS A VERY POWERFUL PERFORM-ANCE!
I GUESS HAVING A MALE CAP-TAIN MAKES A BIG DIFF-ERENCE.
HUH?
Uhh..

HOW DID WE COMPARE TO YOUR OWN OLIENDAN?
IT APPEARS THAT THIS IS YOUR FIRST TIME SEEING US CHEER.
STUDENTS OF KABOSU MINAMI,

I SEE IT DOESN'T TAKE MUCH TO IMPRESS THE GIRLS OF KABOSU MINAMI.

HMPH

Uhhh
YOU GUYS WERE SUPER COOL!

TAKE USAMI. SHE'S IN LOVE WITH ME.
SHE TRIES TO MAINTAIN THE OUENDAN ALL ON HER OWN BECAUSE SHE WANTS ME TO LOVE HER BACK.
THE FOOLISH GIRL.

HONESTLY, IF SHE WANTS TO DO IT WITH ME, ALL SHE HAS TO DO IS PROSTRATE HERSELF NAKED BEFORE ME.
YEAH, CAPTAIN! YOU'RE SO COOL!
IS HE SANE?
I DON'T KNOW...
USAMI LOOKS UP TO ME. SHE WANTS TO BE LIKE ME.
BUT SHE CAN NEVER SURPASS ME.
THAT'S WHY KABOSU MINAMI'S OUENDAN WILL NEVER BE ANYTHING BUT A CHEAP IMITATION OF KABOKOKU'S.

YOU'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO BEAT US.
LET USAMI KNOW THAT.
UGH, SHUT UP ALREADY.
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?
YOU'RE JUST SOME HIGH-SCHOOL KID.

STARE...
GASP
IMA-MURA...
HHH...

THERE ARE NO WINNERS AND LOSERS WHEN IT COMES TO CHEERING!
I MEAN, DOES IT EVEN MATTER WHOSE OUENDAN DOES BETTER?
WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS WHOSE BASEBALL TEAM WINS!
BOOM!!
HUUUSH
YOU...
I KNEW IT.
YOU'RE WITH THE OUENDAN, AREN'T YOU?
IMA-MURA... THAT WAS SO LAME...
...

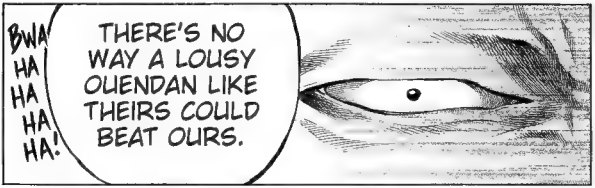
Again!!
アゲイン!!

25.
LET ME SLEEP IN YOUR ARMS
TICK
QUENDA

CHATTER
THEY'RE WITH KABOSU NINAMI'S OUENDAN?!
SO THEY WERE LYING ABOUT BEING FROM THE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER?!
HEY!
SO YOU THOUGHT YOU'D SNEAK IN AND DO SOME DETECTIVE WORK, HUH? WHAT A LOAD!

DID THE BAD GIRL PUT YOU UP TO THIS?
FWISH
"THE BAD GIRL"?
CAPTAIN USAMI HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS!
I-
I TOOK THE INITIATIVE TO COME HERE AND SEE WHAT YOUR OUENDAN WAS LIKE.

KABOSU MINAMI'S THE PLACE THAT HAS THAT GIRL FOR A CAPTAIN, RIGHT?
WOW, I'M SURPRISED SHE FOUND A NEW MEMBER.
THEY MUST BE PRETTY DESPERATE IF THEY'RE TRYING TO SPY ON US.
I MEAN, IT FIGURES. IT'S NOT LIKE THEY HAVE ANYTHING ELSE GOING FOR THEM.
THEY SUCK AT BASEBALL AND CHEERING.
YEAH, FOR SURE.


BWAHAHAHAHA!
THERE'S NO WAY A LOUSY OUENDAN LIKE THEIRS COULD BEAT OURS.

YOU'RE PRETTY FULLA YOURSELVES! JUST SHUT THE HELL UP!
WAIT TILL KANAN BEATS YOUR ASSES AT THE SPRING PRACTICE GAME!
WE'RE GONNA CRUSH YOUR MUSTACHIOED RUNT OF A CAPTAIN, YOU MEATHEADS!
HEY! DON'T TREAT ME LIKE SOME VENTRILOQUIST'S DUMMY!
WHAT WAS I SUPPOSED TO DO? YOU WEREN'T GONNA CALL THEM OUT!

CAP-TAIN...
SILENCE.

IT TAKES GUTS TO CROSS INTO ENEMY TERRITORY AND CHALLENGE THEM HEAD-ON. I ADMIRE THAT.
WELL, WELL, WELL.
YOU SEEM TO BE QUITE CONFIDENT IN YOUR SCHOOL AND ITS OUENDAN.
THAT'S NOT ...
Man up already!
IT WASN'T ..
NO ...

HE'S QUIET AS A MOUSE.
SNICKER
SNICKER
WHOA.
IMA-MURA.
KIN-ICHIRO ...
WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
ALL RIGHT.
KIN-ICHIRO IMA-MURA, HUH?
YOU CAN GO NOW.

AND ONCE WE HAVE, I'LL COMFORT USAMI BY DOING IT WITH HER AGAIN.
WE'RE GOING TO WIPE THE FLOOR WITH YOU.
AT THE SPRING PRAC-TICE GAME,
DUUUN

HA!
YOU'RE TOO COOL, CAPTAIN!
WOOOO!

OSU MINAMI HIGH SCHOOL
WHAT THE HELL'S HIS PROBLEM?!
HOW'D AN ASSHOLE LIKE HIM GET SO POPULAR?
AAA!
AAA!

...
HE'S SO FULL OF HIMSELF!

LET'S DO IT, BAD GIRL..
IMAMURA ...
YOU'RE THINKING WHAT I'M THINKING, AREN'T YOU?
NO, I'M NOT. SHUT UP.
DON'T TALK TO ME.

CLAT
CLAT
CLAT
CLAT
I KNOW YOU ARE! WHAT'D HE MEAN HE'D "DO IT WITH HER AGAIN," ANYWAY?!
I DON'T WANNA THINK ABOUT IT!
WHO CARES?
GASP
WHOA.
THE CAPTAIN'S STILL HERE PRACTICING ALL BY HERSELF?
"USAMI LOOKS UP TO ME. SHE WANTS TO BE LIKE ME."
"BUT SHE CAN NEVER SURPASS ME."
"THAT'S WHY KABOSU MINAMI'S OUENDAN WILL NEVER BE ANYTHING BUT A CHEAP IMITATION OF KABOKOKU'S!"
SO IT'S TRUE THEN... SHE REALLY DOES...
COME TO THINK OF IT, WE DO USE THE SAME MOVES AS THEM, DON'T WE?

DAMN IT, IMAMURA!
WHERE'D YOU RUN OFF TO?!
PER YOUR ORDERS ...
...I WENT TO SEE KABOKOKU'S OUENDAN.

WHAT?
ドキ BADUMP
GRRR!!

THAT MUST MEAN ...
YOU MET CAPTAIN IWASAKI?!
YES, IN FACT. I DID.
HE SAYS THEY'RE GONNA BEAT US AT THE SPRING PRACTICE GAME,
AND THEN HE'S GONNA DO IT WITH YOU AGAIN.
WHAT'S HE MEAN "AGAIN," BY THE WAY?
THAT WAS WAY TOO BLUNT, IMAMURA.

TH-
THAT'S RIDIC-ULOUS!
BLUSH
DID HE REALLY SAY THAT?!

SO YOU DID DO IT WITH HIM ...
NO NO NO! HE DIDN'T MEAN IT LIKE THAT! NO WAY!
IS USAMI STILL AT IT?
THEN WHAT EXACTLY DID HE MEAN?
OH, THERE'S IMAMURA
...
HE JUST ...
...GAVE ME A HUG.

WAIT.
DON'T TELL ME YOU SERIOUSLY *LIKE* THAT MUSTACHIOED RUNT!
GRRRRRR
YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING ME!
YOU KEPT THE OUENDAN GOING ALL ON YOUR OWN JUST 'CAUSE YOU WANTED HIM TO LOVE YOU?!
THAT'S SO STUPID!

GAH!
THUNK
THUNK
THUNK

STOP IT, USAMI.
WHAT'D HE SAY TO YOU?
YOU'RE NOT ACTUALLY INTO THE OUENDAN.
YOU'RE JUST INTO SOME GUY WHO'S IN AN OUENDAN. YOU'RE SUCH A GIRL. I'VE NEVER FELT SO LET DOWN.
YOU MAY TRY AND ACT ALL OLD-SCHOOL, BUT AT THE END OF THE DAY, YOU'RE JUST SOME GIRL. I'M HONESTLY DISAPPOINTED.
OH GOD.
WHAT A LET-DOWN.
...HUH?
HUP

YOU'RE NO BETTER THAN A LIONESS IN HEAT!
YOU'VE GOT YOURSELF A NICE LITTLE MALE HAREM, DON'T YOU?
DON'T JUMP INTO THE FIGHT TO COP A FEEL!
THUNK
THUNK
idea
Let's get out of here already.
THUNK

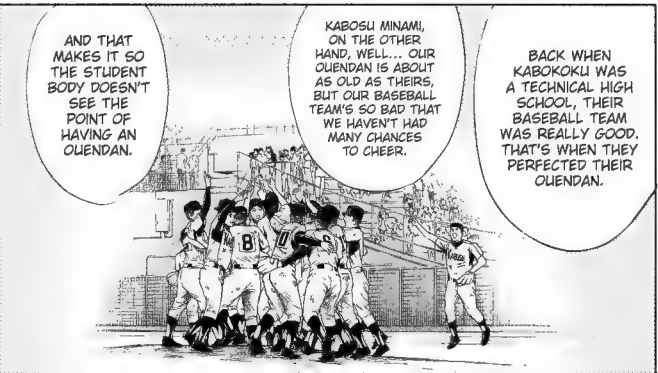
OUENDAN

HE HAS AUTHORITY OVER ALL OF KABOKOKU'S CHEERING ACTIVITIES, AND HIS OUENDAN'S DISCIPLINE IS STRICTER THAN THAT OF ANY OTHER IN THE PREFECTURE. HE ALSO HAS THE OVERWHELMING SUPPORT OF HIS SCHOOL'S ATHLETIC CLUBS.
AND SINCE THOSE CLUBS ARE GOOD AT WHAT THEY DO, THE OUENDAN HAS PLENTY OF OPPORTUNITIES TO CHEER THEM ON.
THIS IS CHIHIRO IWASAKI, CAPTAIN OF KABOKOKU'S OUENDAN.
CAPTAIN CHIHIRO IWASAKI

I LOVE YOU, CAPTAIN! I LOVE EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU!
SHUT UP!
YEAH. OUR TEAMS ALL SUCK, EVERYONE HATES THE CAPTAIN, AND OUR CHEERING CLUBS ARE ALL ORGANIZED SEPARATELY.
IN OTHER WORDS, THEY'RE NOTHING LIKE US.
YOU SHUT UP, TOO!

IMA-MURA! HEY!
YOU'VE GOTTA LISTEN!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WENT TO KABOKOKU AND CALLED THEM OUT DIRECTLY. NOW WE *HAVE* TO WIN.
MEH ...
IT'S NOT LIKE IT MATTERS WHAT WE DO... IT'S NOT GONNA MAGICALLY MAKE OUR BASE-BALL TEAM BETTER...

IT'S *BECAUSE* OUR SCHOOL'S TEAMS ARE SO LACKLUSTER THAT WE HAVE TO PICK UP THE SLACK!
YOU MAG-GOT!
Show some spirit, boy!
THAT'S TRUE.
AND I MEAN, GOOD SPORTS TEAMS AND A GOOD OUENDAN TEND TO GO HAND-IN-HAND.


BACK WHEN KABOKOKU WAS A TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL, THEIR BASEBALL TEAM WAS REALLY GOOD. THAT'S WHEN THEY PERFECTED THEIR OUENDAN.
KABOSU MINAMI, ON THE OTHER HAND, WELL... OUR OUENDAN IS ABOUT AS OLD AS THEIRS, BUT OUR BASEBALL TEAM'S SO BAD THAT WE HAVEN'T HAD MANY CHANCES TO CHEER.
AND THAT MAKES IT SO THE STUDENT BODY DOESN'T SEE THE POINT OF HAVING AN OUENDAN.

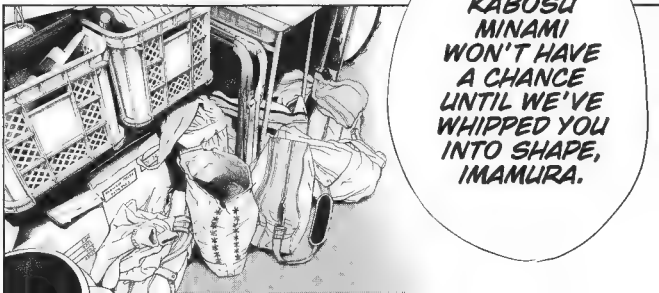
ACCORDING TO MY RESEARCH, THOUGH,
OUR BASEBALL TEAM SHOULD BE able TO PLAY AT A SIMILAR LEVEL TO KABOKOKU'S THIS YEAR.
BAM
ASSUMING OUR INJURED PITCHER, SUZUKI, CAN RECOVER IN TIME,
WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO BEAT KABOKOKU FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER AT THE SPRING PRACTICE GAME.
ALL RIGHT!
THEN EVERYTHING'S RIDING ON WHO HAS THE BETTER OUENDAN!
SMACK
LET'S SHOW 'EM WHAT WE'VE GOT!
IT'S BEEN A WHILE.
I'M READY TO KEEP BEATING THE DRUMS UNTIL MY BLOOD STAINS THEM RED.

YOU GUYS...
IMA-MURA!
PULL YOUR-SELF TO-GETH-ER!
SMACK
SMACK
THANK YOU SO MUCH.

WHAT'S WITH HIM? NOT THAT HE WAS EVER MUCH OF A DOER...
BUT I'M PRETTY SURE HE'S GOTTEN WORSE.
HE ISN'T SHOWING THE SLIGHTEST HINT OF MOTIVA-TION.
I MEAN, HE'S ONLY IN HIS FIRST YEAR AND HE'S ALREADY THIS SHAMELESSLY APATHETIC? I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT TO SAY...

USAMI.
IF YOU DON'T SET HIM STRAIGHT NOW, HE'LL NEVER RESPECT YOU.
HRR-GRR
...
ALL RIGHT!
BAM

WE'RE PUTTING YOU THROUGH BOOT CAMP.


KABOSU MINAMI WON'T HAVE A CHANCE UNTIL WE'VE WHIPPED YOU INTO SHAPE, IMAMURA.

26.
OUENDAN BOOT CAMP!

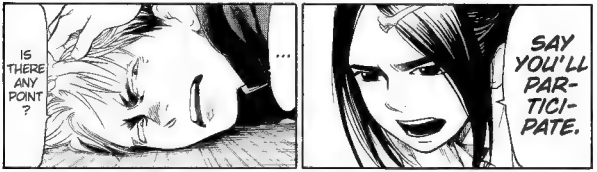
WAIT.
YOU WANT TO HOLD A BOOT CAMP?
IT'S NOT EVEN SUMMER BREAK YET!
I THOUGHT I WAS DONE WITH THOSE ...
DO YOU REALLY THINK WE CAN FIX HIM IN JUST A DAY OR TWO?!
WE COULD SAVE OURSELVES THE TIME BY FINDING SOME BETTER RECRUITS!
WH-WHERE WERE YOU THINKING WE'D HOLD IT? A HOT SPRINGS RESORT WOULD BE NICE! WE SHOULD ALL BATHE TOGETHER!

QUIET!
IF NOT NOW, THEN WHEN?
WE'VE GOTTA SET THIS SLACKER STRAIGHT SOONER RATHER THAN LATER!
SQUEEEEZE
...

TO BEAT KABOKOKU AT THE SPRING PRACTICE GAME,
WE'LL HAVE TO BRING IMAMURA AS CLOSE TO OUR LEVEL AS WE CAN, SO HE'LL BE LESS OF A BURDEN.
HEY ...
WATCH IT.
IF WE LOSE BECAUSE OF HIM, THEN THE BASEBALL TEAM–
HEY!
TUSSLE
TUSSLE
TUSSLE

WHETHER WE BEAT KABO-KOKU ISN'T ALL ON ME!
IT'S A BASEBALL GAME, FOR CHRISSAKE! IT'S RIDIC-ULOUS TO TREAT IT LIKE SOME CHEERING COMPE-TITION!
AND WHAT A BURDEN I AM ISN'T EXACTLY NEWS!
JERK
DON'T PET ME LIKE SOME PUPPY!
SO, CAP-TAIN!
THINK YOU COULD QUIT BLAMING EVERY-THING ON ME?!
RO
AR

IF YOU DON'T WANNA GO TO BOOT CAMP,
THEN YOU'RE GETTING A HAIRCUT.
IT'S YOUR CHOICE, IMAMURA.
AAAAAGH! STOP! STOP IT!
VRT VRT VRT VRT VRT
GRAB
GRAB


SAY YOU'LL PARTICIPATE.
...
IS THERE ANY POINT?

VZZ VZZ VZZ VZZ VZZ VZZ
VZT VZT VZT
OKAY, OKAY! I'LL DO IT!

UNH, UNH ...
ALL RIGHT, THEN WE'LL HAVE BOOT CAMP THIS WEEKEND ON FRIDAY, SATURDAY, AND SUNDAY. UNDERSTOOD?
IF YOU DON'T GO, THEN–
OSU!!
WE'RE IN!

I THINK YOUR NEW HAIRCUT LOOKS GOOD
KIN-CHAN! WHAT'S THE MATTER?

IF SHE HATES ME SO MUCH, SHE SHOULD JUST GIVE UP ON ME ALREADY! WHAT A DUMBASS...
IT'S NOT LIKE I LIKE HER OR ANYTHING, BUT SHE KNOWS JUST HOW TO PUSH MY BUTTONS!
I DON'T WANNA GO TO BOOT CAMP! I DON'T WANNA SPEND ALL DAY STARING AT THAT BITCH'S FACE!

BUT NOW...
...IT'S LIKE A HURRICANE IS RAGING THROUGH MY HEART.
...I NEVER HAD TO DEAL WITH STUPID EMOTIONS LIKE THIS.
BEFORE I JUMPED BACK IN TIME...

NORMALLY, WE HOLD OUR OUENDAN BOOT CAMP EVERY YEAR DURING SUMMER BREAK.
THAT FRI-DAY ...
OUR "OUENDAN BOOT CAMP FROM HELL" IS SUCH AN ORDEAL THAT WE'VE HAD PEOPLE DESERT ON US IN THE PAST.
IT'S NEI-THER EASY NOR FUN.
IT'S DAY AFTER DAY OF 20-KILOMETER RUNS, STRENGTH TRAINING, VOICE PROJECTION EXERCISES, AND INTENSIVE CHOREO-GRAPHY DRILLS, ALL UNDER THE SCORCH-ING HEAT OF THE SUN.
NOD
CLENCH
AND YET HERE YOU GUYS ARE, REQUESTING THAT WE GO AHEAD AND HOLD ONE IN SPRING... IT MAKES ME SO PROUD!
NNNGH
BREEZY!
WE WON'T HAVE AS MUCH TIME FOR THIS ONE AS WE NORMALLY DO, BUT I'VE GOTTEN THE OKAY TO USE THE SCHOOL BUILDING TONIGHT AND TOMORROW NIGHT.
IT WON'T BE LONG UNTIL OUR SPRING PRACTICE GAME WITH KABO-KOKU!
I WANT YOU GUYS TO TURN THE OUEN-DAN INTO A WELL-OILED CHEERING MACHINE!

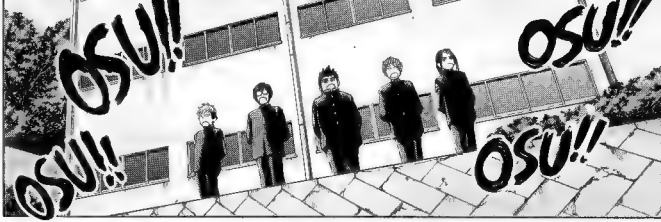
OSU!!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!
I WAS BORED!
YOU SHOULD BE HAPPY THAT A COUPLE OF CUTE GIRLS LIKE US ARE GOING TO BE YOUR TEMPORARY MANAGERS!
RIGHT, REC-CHAN? WEREN'T YOU LOOKING FOR SOME-THING TO DO?
ACTU-A...Y, I'M A LITTLE BUSY WITH CRAM SCHOOL, BUT YOU KNOW.

IMA-MURA!
THIS BOOT CAMP IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN ALL ABOUT OUR TRADITIONS IN THE KABOSU MINAMI OUENDAN.
YOU ARE TO CHERISH THEM AS YOUR FORE-BEARS HAVE!
I DON'T FEEL LIKE IT.
SMMACE
WHAT DO I CARE ABOUT YOUR STUPID TRADI-TIONS?
ANS-WER ME!
IMA-MURA!

WE'LL START WITH A TEN-KILOMETER RUN ONCE WE'RE DONE STRETCH-ING!
UGGGH...
...
I WANNA HEAR YOU YELLING!
SHUT UP!
YOU'RE FALLING BEHIND, SUGA!
YOU'VE PUT ON MORE WEIGHT, HAVEN'T YOU?
WHEEZE PHAAAT
WHEEZE PHAAAT
WHEEZE PHAAAT
WHEEZE PHAAAT
WHEEZE PHAAAT
...
WAGH!
WHAT'S WRONG, SUGA? ARE YOU OKAY?
OH...
GOD...

AGH.
OOH, THAT HURT. I MIGHT'VE SPRAINED MY ANKLE.
SORRY. YOU GUYS GO ON AHEAD.
...
IMA-MURA! RUN, DAMN IT!
QUIT SLACK-ING!
HEY, I DON'T SEE YOU RUNNING ANYTHING BUT YOUR MOUTH.
YOU ASS!
HE'S RIGHT, IMA-MURA.
YOU HAVE A BAD HABIT OF GIVING UP EARLY AND SLACKING OFF.
OH YEAH?
IT'S TIME TO WORK ON VOICE PRO-JEC-TION!


OSU!!
OSU!!
OSU!!
OSU!!

OKA DOESN'T EXACTLY DO A BAD JOB AT ANY-THING...
...BUT HE KNOWS JUST WHERE TO CUT CORNERS AND NEVER BOTHERS GOING THE EXTRA MILE.
YOU SLY DOG ...
SORRY. I THINK I'D BETTER SAVE MY VOICE FOR WHEN IT REALLY COUNTS.
MY THROAT'S A LITTLE SCRATCHY.
MM!
AHEM!
KOFF
AHEM!
KOFF
OSU!
OSU!
OSU!

BASEBALL GAMES TEND TO RUN LONG, SO WE'LL BE TAKING TURNS ON THE DRUMS.
I WANT YOU TO LEARN TO PLAY THEM, IMA-MURA.
YOU CAN'T PULL ONE OVER ON ME THAT EASILY.
IMA-MURA!
YOU'RE SLACKING AGAIN!
ドン…
スナ…

ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR!
I DON'T KNOW...
DON'T WORRY! JUST FEEL THE BEAT!
You'll pick it up in no time!
UH...
I DON'T REALLY KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT MUSIC.

DUM DUM DUM
Whoa, that's pretty cool.
IT'S SOMETHING YOU'RE BORN WITH.
THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF PEOPLE: THOSE WHO HAVE RHYTHM AND THOSE WHO DON'T.
KA-
SNAP
AND YOU, IMAMURA-KUN, HAVE NO RHYTHM.
GOD DAMN IT, CHANKUMA...
YOU JUST DON'T WANNA PUT IN THE EFFORT TO TEACH SOMEONE WHO'S NOT A NATURAL LIKE YOU.

...
DUM...
DADUM...
DUM
DUM
DUM

YOU HAVE NO RHYTHM.
TIME TO GIVE UP.
YOU COULD AT LEAST TRY TO TEACH ME!

DIN-NER'S READY!
OH MY GOD! DOES SHE HAVE TO NAG ME ABOUT EVERY LITTLE THING?
YOU'VE GOT TO PUSH YOUR LIMITS! CHALLENGE YOURSELF!
GIVING UP HALF-WAY SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO PUT IN ANY EFFORT AGAIN?
WOW, IMA-MURA.

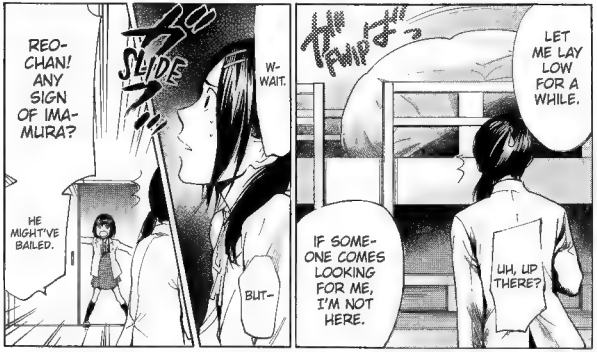
REO-CHAN'S REALLY GOOD AT COOKING!
DON'T YOU THINK SO, IMA-MURA?
WOULD YOU LIKE SECONDS?
SUGA-SEN-PAI.
YOU PULLED OUT ALL THE STOPS.
Jungle
WHOA, THIS IS GOOD!
I'M IM-PRESSED. DID YOU GUYS MAKE THIS ALL ON YOUR OWN?

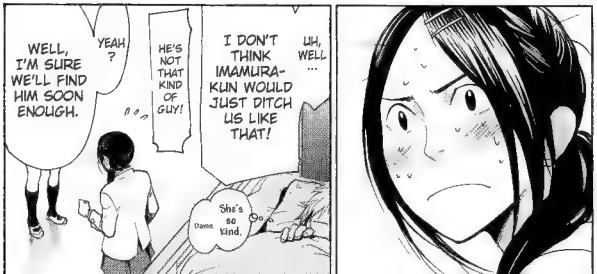
AND YOURS TRULY MADE THE SALAD. ♥
OH.
YEAH, I CAN'T EAT CILANTRO.
No salad for me.
WAIT, BUT YOU WERE JUST EATING IT!
WELL, I MEAN, I CAN EAT IT. I JUST DON'T LIKE IT.
Aww!
YOU COULD EAT IT, BUT YOU'D RATHER JUST STICK TO OLD HABITS, HUH?
YOU JUST CAN'T STAND TO SET ONE FOOT OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE.
THAT'S WHY YOUR TRAINING IS GOING SO—
RAGE
CLANG
IF YOU HATE ME THAT MUCH, THEN WHY DON'T YOU JUST SAY SO?!

SORRY...
IT'S FINE.
I'LL CLEAN THIS UP.
IMAMURA! YOU DON'T HAVE TO GET ALL WORKED UP OVER SOME CILANTRO!
DASH
...
KIDS THESE DAYS...
...
DON'T TREAT ME LIKE SOME ANGRY KID!
HELL, I'M OLDER THAN YOU ARE (MENTALLY)! DUMBASS!

A BOOT CAMP LIKE THIS WON'T DO SHIT TO HELP US BEAT KABOKOKU!

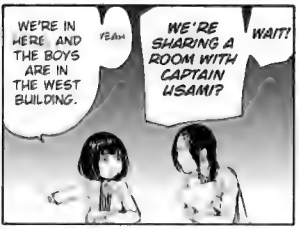
OH...
YOU'RE SPENDING THE NIGHT HERE?
YEAH.
ME AND AKI-CHAN.


LET ME LAY LOW FOR A WHILE.
UH, UP THERE?
IF SOMEONE COMES LOOKING FOR ME, I'M NOT HERE.
W-WAIT.
SLIDE
REO-CHAN! ANY SIGN OF IMAMURA?
HE MIGHT'VE BAILED.
BUT-


UH, WELL...
I DON'T THINK IMAMURA-KUN WOULD JUST DITCH US LIKE THAT!
HE'S NOT THAT KIND OF GUY!
YEAH?
WELL, I'M SURE WE'LL FIND HIM SOON ENOUGH.
She's so kind.
Damn

CLICK
SLIDE
SHMP
GLANCE
G-GOOD IDEA.
ANYWAY, WE MIGHT AS WELL TAKE OUR SHOWERS NOW.
SNOOORE
SNOOORE
SNOOORE
RATTLE, RATTLE... SHMP!
GASP
BACK ALREADY?
ROLL...

YOU CAN'T BE TOO CAREFUL WITH CHAN-KUMA AROUND.
THAT'S TRUE


WE'RE IN HERE AND THE BOYS ARE IN THE WEST BUILDING.
YEAH
WE'RE SHARING A ROOM WITH CAPTAIN USAMI?
WAIT!

27. A HARD DAY'S NIGHT

HUH?
ONE OF THEM IS BACK.
BUT IT'S TOO DARK TO TELL WHO.
IS IT SHIBATA OR FUJIEDA?

LET'S SEE
LOOKS LIKE SHIBATA
HEY-
?!
THUMP
THUMP

IMA-MURA ...
WHERE'D YOU RUN OFF TO?!
GOD DAMN IT!
THAT'S NOT SHI-BATA.
NO ...
CREEAK
BA-DUM-D
BA-DUM-D

IS SOMEONE THERE?
CAP-TAIN USAMI ?!
DON'T TELL ME...
IS THAT YOU...

YOU CALLED ?!
OKUMA?
HE SOUNDS LIKE THAT GIRL FROM THE EXORCIST
THUD
You bitch!

CHANGE
HAVE YOU FOUND IMAMURA?
NOT YET.
OKAY.
HI, CAPTAIN.
OH.
SLIDE !!!
CAPTAAAIN!
I NEED A HUG, PLEASE!
IT'S SO COLD OUT HERE!
WE ALREADY TOOK OUR SHOWERS.

KITAJIMA-SENSEI IS CALLING HIS HOUSE NOW.
...
IT'S GETTING LATE, THOUGH, SO WE'RE RETIRING FOR THE DAY.
WE'LL HUNT HIM DOWN TOMORROW.
...

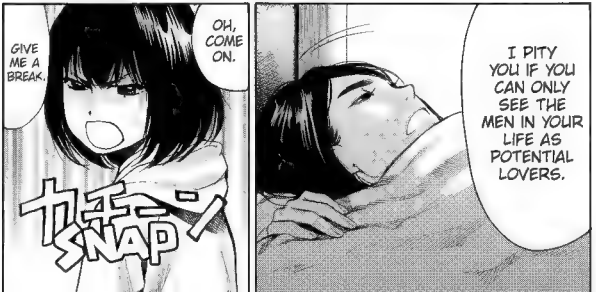
NOW,
I'M GOING TO BED. I'LL TAKE THE TOP BUNK.
HUP!
WHOOOA!
UHH, UMM, CAPTAIN! YOU SHOULD TAKE A SHOWER! YOU HAVEN'T HAD ONE YET, HAVE YOU?

I JUST WANNA GET TO BED. I'M TIRED.
I'LL TAKE A SHOWER IN THE MORNING.
UHHHHH! ACTUALLY! Y'KNOW, I WON'T BE ABLE TO SLEEP IF I DON'T HAVE THE TOP BUNK! AND IF I'M NOT NEXT TO THE WINDOW! IT'S JUST HOW I AM! SORRY. I ALREADY WENT AHEAD AND PUT MY FUTON DOWN UP THERE! I'M REALLY SORRY!
OH YEAH?
YOU CAN HAVE IT THEN.
WAIT, YOU'RE GOING TO BED, TOO, REO-CHAN?
YOU'RE ALREADY LYING DOWN AND EVERY-THING.
OH... YEAH. FOR SOME REASON, I'M SUDDENLY FEELING REALLY SLEEPY.
IT'S TIME FOR BED!
SHUUUSHん...

HUH?!
SO, REO-CHAN...DO YOU HAVE A CRUSH ON IMAMURA?
HONESTLY, I'M PRETTY SURE YOU DO.

I-

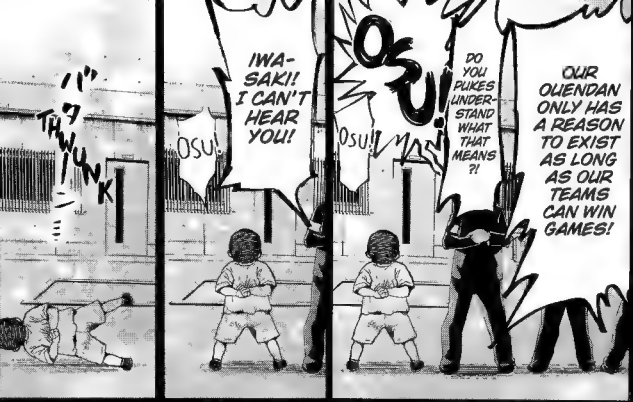
HUH.
I SEE.
I DON'T THINK OF HIM AS A BOY AT ALL, SO I MEAN, PROBABLY NOT!

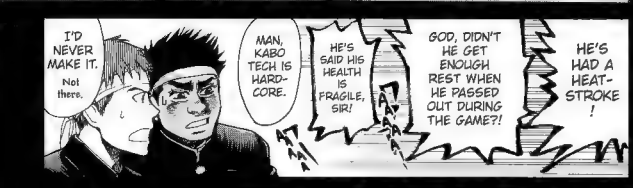

GIVE ME A BREAK.
OH, COME ON.
カチーン
SNAP
I PITY YOU IF YOU CAN ONLY SEE THE MEN IN YOUR LIFE AS POTENTIAL LOVERS.

I MEAN, CAPTAIN USAMI...
SNAP
DO YOU SERIOUSLY EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THAT YOU'RE CONSTANTLY SURROUNDED BY ALL THESE GUYS IN THE OUENDAN AND YOU'RE NOT GOING OUT WITH A SINGLE ONE OF THEM?
OH YEAH!
YOU LIKE THE CAPTAIN OF KABOKOKU'S OUENDAN, RIGHT?
I DON'T JUST DEVELOP CRUSHES ON WHATEVER BOY I HAPPEN TO SEE REGULARLY! WHAT DO YOU TAKE ME FOR, A DOG?!
THAT KIND OF THING IS NORMAL FOR A HIGH-SCHOOLER! IF YOU DON'T CRUSH ON THE BOYS YOU SEE, THEN WHO WILL YOU CRUSH ON?
BADUMP
BADUMP
BADUMP
BADUMP
God
I wish they'd shut up.
WAIT...
HUH?
HUUUSH
NO WAY.
YOU CAN'T REALLY LIKE THAT MUSTACHIOED RUNT, CAN YOU?
...
WHAT?!
EW!
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!
WHYYY?

I DON'T HAVE A CRUSH ON HIM OR WANT TO DATE HIM OR ANY-THING.
HE WAS JUST THERE FOR ME WHEN I NEEDED IT.
I MET CAPTAIN IWASAKI ...
KATTING
YEEEAH!
...IN MY FIRST YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL.

OSU!
YOU CALL THAT YELLING ?!
QUIT HALF-ASSING IT!
HEY, ISN'T THAT KABO TECH'S OUENDAN?
I SAW THEM AT THE OPENING CERE-MONY.
I HEARD THEIR TEAM LOST THE FIRST GAME OF THE TOURNA-MENT.
APPARENTLY, THEY'RE GOING TO BECOME KABOSU INTERNATIONAL SUPER SCIENCE SECONDARY SCHOOL NEXT YEAR.
REALLY ?


DO YOU PUKES UNDER-STAND WHAT THAT MEANS ?!
OSU!
OUR OUENDAN ONLY HAS A REASON TO EXIST AS LONG AS OUR TEAMS CAN WIN GAMES!
IWA-SAKI! I CAN'T HEAR YOU!
OSU!
OSU!
バ
THWUNK
K


I'D NEVER MAKE IT.
Not there.
MAN, KABO TECH IS HARD-CORE.
HE'S SAID HIS HEALTH IS FRAGILE, SIR!
GOD, DIDN'T HE GET ENOUGH REST WHEN HE PASSED OUT DURING THE GAME?!
HE'S HAD A HEAT-STROKE !

AND THERE'S NO WAY THAT KID'S GONNA STAY IN THE OUENDAN MUCH LONGER, EITHER.

BUT THE NEXT YEAR...
OSU!
HURRY UP AND GRAB THOSE BAGS!

...IWASAKI WAS LOUDER THAN ANYONE ELSE IN THE OUENDAN.
HE MUST'VE WORKED SO HARD AT IT.
HE WAS LIKE A WHOLE NEW MAN.
THAT WAS RIGHT AROUND WHEN WE HAD TO GO ON HIATUS.
I WAS JUST STANDING THERE IN SILENCE, WATCHING THE OTHER SCHOOLS' OUENDAN AND FEELING SORRY FOR MYSELF.
I WAS SO JEALOUS.

YOU'RE IN KABOSU MINAMI'S OUENDAN, AREN'T YOU?
I'VE HEARD ABOUT YOUR HAVING TO GO ON HIATUS.
SO, ARE YOU GOING TO QUIT?
...
DON'T YOU DARE STOP CHEERING.
I BETTER SEE YOU HERE AGAIN.

NEXT YEAR,
I WANT US TO EXCHANGE YELLS.
WHAAAA-
AAAAH!
OH MY GOD, SERIOUSLY?!
THE "IT" HE WAS TALKING ABOUT WAS A HUG?
DAMN. WHY DON'T YOU TWO JUST GO OUT ALREADY?
IT- IT'S NOT LIKE I WANT HIM TO BE ATTRACTED TO ME!
I JUST WANT TO COMPETE WITH HIS OUENDAN AND WIN!
THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO IT!
OH GOD.
YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING ME.

SHE MAY THINK SHE'S A STRONG WOMAN TOUGHING IT OUT IN A MAN'S WORLD, BUT SHE'S ACTUALLY JUST LETTING THE SPECIAL TREATMENT SHE GETS GO TO HER HEAD.
SHE'S OBLIVIOUS TO HER OWN FEELINGS, AND THAT MAKES IT EVEN WORSE.
SHE DOESN'T ACTUALLY WANT TO BEAT HIM AT ALL.
WHAT A MESS.
SHE'S JUST LIKE ME...
SHE JUST WANTS TO WIN HIS APPROVAL.

ACHOO!
SNOOORE
NOW LET'S GET TO BED!
ASLEEP?
FEW HOURS LATER
SHIF

OKAY, CAPTAIN.
IT'S HIGH TIME THAT YOU GAVE UP ON ME.
I'M NOT GONNA BE THE ONLY ONE WHO HAS TO SUFFER!
YOU CAN BURN IN HELL RIGHT ALONG WITH ME!

SOUNDS LIKE IMAMURA DIDN'T GO HOME, AFTER ALL. I'M NOT SURE HOW TO HANDLE THIS.
カリラ SLIDE ラリ
HUH?
YOU GUYS ARE IN BED ALREADY?

THERE YOU ARE, IMA-MURA.
OH!

GOOD NIGHT...

I HATE MY LIFE!
IMA-MURA AAAA!

28. WALK ON

CHIRP
CHIRP
NO.
RUN.
WHY SHOULD I?

I'VE ALREADY TOLD YOU! YOU SKIPPED OUT ON PRACTICE TO GO SLEEP IN THE GIRLS' DORM LAST NIGHT, SO NOW YOU HAVE TO FACE THE CONSEQUENCES!
HAVE YOU NO SHAME?!
WE WERE ABOUT THIS CLOSE TO GETTING PUT ON HIATUS AGAIN, THANKS TO YOU!
DO YOU GET THAT?!

USAMI... I STILL THINK MAKING HIM RUN 15 KILOMETERS THIS EARLY IN THE MORNING IS A LITTLE HARSH.
HELL NO, WE'VE GOTTA MAKE HIM PAY!
CAN I BE UNTIED YET?

UGH.
IMAMURA!
CAPTAIN USAMI.
YOU MUST THINK YOU'RE HOT STUFF, HUH?
WHAT, YOU THOUGHT I'D CRAWL INTO BED WITH YOU?
EXCUSE ME?

I REALIZED THAT, HONESTLY, WE'LL NEVER BEAT THEM AS LONG AS YOU'RE OUR CAPTAIN.
IT DAWNED ON ME WHEN I MET THE CAPTAIN OF KABOKOKU'S OUENDAN THE OTHER DAY.

I'M SURE YOU ALREADY KNOW YOU CAN'T CUT IT. WE DON'T EVEN HAVE A CHANCE.
I KNOW YOU'RE TRYING TO BE ALL OLD-SCHOOL LIKE HIM, BUT IT JUST DOESN'T HAVE THE SAME OOMPH WHEN A GIRL DOES IT.
I GUESS IT'S A MAN'S JOB, AFTER ALL.

...BUT AREN'T YOU THE ONE WHO'S REALLY WEIGHING US DOWN?
YOU TREAT ME LIKE I'M THIS ENORMOUS BURDEN...
SNAP

IMA-MURA!
YOU CAN'T TALK TO THE CAPTAIN THAT WAY!
YOU BETTER QUIT RUNNING YOUR MOUTH AND START LISTENING TO YOUR SUPERIORS, PAL!
OH REALLY?
DO AS YOU SAY, NOT AS YOU DO, HUH, RAKKI SUGA? WE ALL KNOW THE ONLY THING YOU'RE ANY GOOD AT IS YELLING.
AND OKA, ALL YOU DO IS CUT CORNERS AND PUT IN AS LITTLE EFFORT AS YOU CAN GET AWAY WITH.
WHILE I'M AT IT, CHAN-KUMA, YOU ONLY KNOW HOW TO DO THINGS YOUR WAY. YOU DON'T GET WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE BAD AT SOMETHING.
YOU ALL DISAPP-OINTED ME YESTER-DAY.

I CAN'T RESPECT ANY OF YOU.
GLANCE
HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO TAKE THIS BOOT CAMP SERIOUSLY?!
I SHOULD JUST LET CAPTAIN USAMI MAKE A FOOL OF HERSELF IN FRONT OF KABOKOKU ALL ON HER OWN.
NOT ANY-MORE.
AT THIS POINT, THE OUENDAN CAN ROT, FOR ALL I CARE!

OKAY, IMAMURA.
I GET IT.
UH, EXCUSE ME...
IS IT OKAY IF WE START GETTING BREAKFAST READY?
WHOA, YOU GUYS ARE GOING FOR A RUN THIS EARLY IN THE MORNING?
I can tell you now that Imamura's gonna bail.
WHAT?!
WE'LL ALL RUN, THEN! IS THAT BETTER?
NO! I'LL RUN, TOO!
BESIDES, YOU'RE JUST GONNA RIDE THAT BIKE AND CRACK THE WHIP ON US, RIGHT, CAPTAIN?
HUH? I MEAN, NOT REALLY?
That's not what I meant
WAIT!
HUH?
GRAB
SO YOU'RE GONNA RUN, TOO, IMAMURA! GOT IT?
I SAID I'D RUN, AND I WILL!
I MEAN ...
ARE YOU SURE?
WAIT ...
YOU WILL?!
RAAAAAAGE

IF YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING TO SAY, YOU CAN SAY IT AFTER YOU'VE PASSED ME!
DASH
WHEEEZE
PAAANT
...
PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT
WHEEEZE
PAAANT
PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT
...
WHEEEZE
PAAANT
WHEEEZE
PAAANT
WHEEEZE

GAH!
IMA-MURA ...
NNGH
DON'T SLOW DOWN ...
HZZZ
HZZZ
NNGH
RUN AS FAST AS YOU CAN ...
HUGH!
HUGH!
HUGH!
HUGH!
HAAAA
HAAAA
BUT WHAT DO I DO NOW THAT I'VE PASSED HER?
THAT WAS EASY.
WHAT-EVER. I'M WALK-ING.
SHE TALKS AWFULLY TOUGH FOR SOMEONE THAT OUT OF SHAPE.
DASH!!
WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?!
AAAGH!
YOU'LL RE-GRET IT...
IF I CATCH YOU WALK-ING ...

GOOD IDEA.
YEAH
USAMI'S NOT CATCHING UP ANY TIME SOON. LET'S TAKE A BREAK.
CHANKUMA'S SO FAR AHEAD I'VE LOST SIGHT OF HIM.
PAANT
GOD, I'M SO TIRED.
PAANT

IT'S NOT LIKE WE'LL GET RESULTS OUT OF JUST A COUPLE DAYS OF TRAINING ANYWAY.
DAMN IT, USAMI...
SHE'S ALWAYS BEEN TOO SLOW ON HER FEET.
MAN, I'M BEAT
THERE'S NO WAY WE'RE GONNA LAST THE WHOLE DAY AFTER STARTING IT WITH A 15-KILOMETER RUN.
AND I DOUBT THIS WILL BE THE LAST OF IT, NOT TO MENTION STRENGTH TRAINING...

YEAH, ALL THREE OF US.
WE THREW UP RIGHT HERE BY THIS RIVER, DIDN'T WE?
YEAH, WE REALLY WENT THROUGH HELL WHEN WE WERE FIRST YEARS.
Our senpai were scary guys.
THE MAIN REASON I QUIT THE OUENDAN LAST YEAR WAS BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANT TO HAVE TO GO THROUGH ANOTHER SUMMER BOOT CAMP, AND YET HERE WE ARE.

I NEVER WOULD'VE MADE IT THROUGH THAT IF YOU GUYS HADN'T BEEN THERE SUFFERING WITH ME.

"I CAN'T— RESPECT ANY OF YOU."

THEN WHY DIDN'T SHE SAY SOME-THING?!
WELL ...

I THINK SHE HAD ALREADY NOTICED THE SAME THING.
RE-MEMBER WHAT IMA-MURA WAS SAYING ?

...I DON'T THINK IMAMURA WAS THE ONLY ONE USAMI WAS FRUS-TRATED WITH.
Y'KNOW, SUGA ...
HUH?

IS THIS AS FAR AS YOU GUYS HAVE MADE IT?
WAVE ぶんっ
I WAS JUST ABOUT TO CROSS THE FINISH LINE, MYSELF.
WAVE ぶんっ
CHAN-KUMA!
BUT I GOT BORED OF RUNNING ON MY OWN, SO I CAME BACK HERE.

EX-ACTLY.
PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT
GLANCE

YOU COULD AT LEAST HAVE THE DECENCY TO WATCH ME DO IT!
GOD DAMN IT! I'M ONLY RUNNING 'CAUSE YOU TOLD ME I HAD TO!

WHAT'S THE POINT? I'M WALKING.
SCREW IT.

...PASSED OUT?
WHAT IF SHE...

...

PANT
PANT
PANT

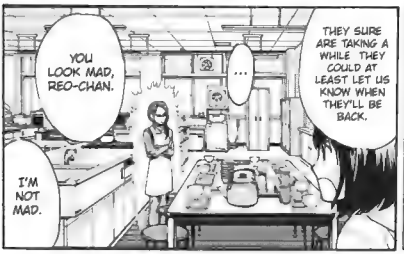
WHAT?!

IMA-
MURA
...
YOU
MUST
HATE
ME...

PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT
CLAT
CLAT
CLAT
YOU'RE SERIOUSLY GONNA WALK AFTER YOU TOLD ME I HAD TO RUN?
SHINAD

IF YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING TO SAY, YOU CAN SAY IT AFTER YOU'VE PASSED ME!
I PASSED YOU A LONG TIME AGO

I DON'T WANNA HEAR IT!
OH, CAPTAIN! YOUR FACE IS AS RED AS A BEET. ARE YOU FEELING ALL RIGHT?
LET'S ALL RUN TOGETHER!
USAMI! IWAMURA!
HEY, THERE THEY ARE.


YOU LOOK MAD, REO-CHAN.
...
THEY SURE ARE TAKING A WHILE THEY COULD AT LEAST LET US KNOW WHEN THEY'LL BE BACK.
I'M NOT MAD.

Again!!
アゲイン!!

29.
USAMI, HOIST BY HER OWN PETARD!

THEY'RE STILL NOT BACK YET...
YEAH, AND IT'S BEEN MORE THAN TWO HOURS.
SEEMS LIKE AN AWFULLY LONG 15 KILOMETERS IF YOU ASK ME!
OH!
THERE THEY ARE!
OH YEAH?!
WHO MADE IT BACK FIRST?
FWIP!
WAIT, WHAT?
THEY'RE ALL JUST WALK-ING?
UHH ...
ACTUALLY, IT LOOKS LIKE...
TAP
TAP
TAP

WOBBLE
OSU...
WOBBLE...
USAMI!
YOU'RE ALMOST THERE!
YOU GOTTA YELL, USAMI!
KEEP GOING! NEVER GIVE UP! YOU GOT THIS!
...

YES!
COULD YOU GET US SOME WATER?
WHEEZE
PANT
WHEEZE
PANT
I THOUGHT YOU WERE THE ONE BEING PUNISHED, IMAMURA.
GOAL!!

Fuck!!!
First we'll need to remove your bra and–
CAP-TAIN! I CAN GIVE YOU A MASS-AGE ANY-WHERE YOU WANT!
RUB RUB
SMACK!!!
DON'T ASK ME... IT JUST SORT OF TURNED INTO THE CAPTAIN'S OWN 24 HOUR RUN AT SOME POINT.
I JUST THOUGHT SHE MIGHT'VE GOTTEN RUN OVER BY A CAR...
YOU'RE SERIOUSLY GONNA WALK AFTER YOU TOLD ME I HAD TO RUN?
...OR PASSED OUT OR SOME-THING.
YOU COMPLAIN NOW, IMAMURA, BUT YOU'RE THE ONE WHO TRIED TO MATCH HER PACE.
I WASN'T REALLY–
We just went back for you guys
UH ...
SO, YOU DON'T HATE HER THEN?
HUH?
I THOUGHT HE WAS TRYING TO GET HER TO LIKE HIM.
NO!
YOU CAN'T HELP BUT BE SEXUALLY ATTRACTED TO THE CAPTAIN, CAN YOU? I UNDERSTAND COMPLETE-LY.
NO!
That's just you!

I MEAN...
NOT THAT I DISLIKE HER...
WH-
WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT?!
STOP THAT.
DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT.
IMAMURA...
WOBBLE
WH-
WHAT?!
ガバ
FWIP!

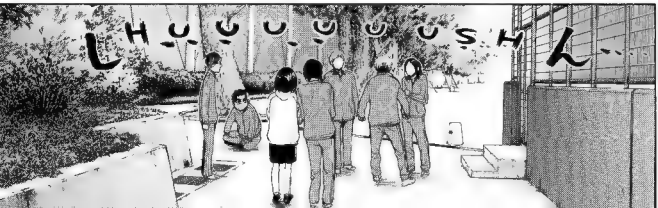
SO...
...YOU LIKE ME, AND THAT'S WHY YOU'VE BEEN ACTING UP THIS WHOLE TIME?

NO NO NO!
YOU IDIOT! THERE'S NO WAY IN HELL! DON'T EVEN JOKE LIKE THAT!

I THOUGHT YOU STARTED ACTING STRANGE AFTER YOU MET THE CAPTAIN OF KABOKOKU'S OUENDAN.
YOU'RE UPSET THAT YOU'RE NOT AS GOOD AS HIM, AREN'T YOU?
NOOO! DON'T GET CARRIED AWAY! WHY SHOULD I BE JEALOUS OF A MUSTACHIOED RUNT LIKE HIM?

SHUT UP! YOU'VE JUST ROTTED YOUR BRAIN WITH TOO MUCH SHOJO MANGA!
IMA-MURA... I KNEW IT.
YOU FELL IN LOVE THE MOMENT YOU LAID EYES ON HER, DIDN'T YOU?
BADUMP...
SHOVE!

I'M UPSET BECAUSE WE'RE NO MATCH FOR KABOKOKU, AND WE'RE NOT EVEN HAVING FUN!
I JUST WANT OUR OUENDAN TO BE MORE THAN A BAD JOKE!


SHUUUUUUUUUN...

ALL RIGHT.
I HEAR YOU.
FOR THE REST OF THE DAY,
YOU'RE OUR CAPTAIN.

HUH?
DID I HIT A SORE SPOT?
Is this what she's like when provoked?
Hey, don't ask me.
NO.
CLENCH
YOU'RE THE FIRST PERSON WHO'S EVER CONFRONTED ME HEAD-ON IN AN EFFORT TO CHANGE THE OUENDAN.

TODAY, YOU'RE GOING TO SHOW ME HOW YOU THINK WE SHOULD DO THINGS.
WAIT, SO...
FOR THE WHOLE DAY?
YUP!
I'LL OBEY YOUR ORDERS ALL DAY.
WELL ...
WILL YOU OR WON'T YOU?
OR IS COMPLAIN-ING ALL YOU KNOW HOW TO DO?
GRRRRRRRR—
FWISH
OH!
BUT DON'T GET THE WRONG IDEA. NO SEX STUFF.
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO HAS THE WRONG IDEA!

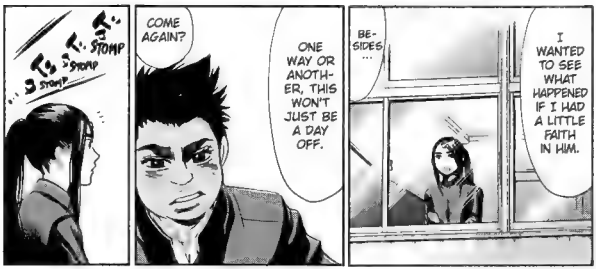
ALL RIGHT.
HERE'S AN ORDER FROM YOUR CAPTAIN.
WE'RE TAKING THE DAY OFF.

IMA-MURA! COME ON!
(TEMPORARY) CAPTAIN'S ROOM
YOU'RE SERI-OUSLY NOT GONNA DO ANY-THING?
SHUT UP. I'M TIRED. I JUST WANNA LIE DOWN.

ANYWAY, YOU GUYS DON'T HAVE TO KEEP WASTING YOUR TIME WITH THE OUENDAN.
FLAP
FLAP
GO GET SOME REST.
...
AND THAT'S AN ORDER.
WHAT-EVER! DO WHAT YOU WANT!
LET'S GO, REO-CHAN.
O-OKAY.

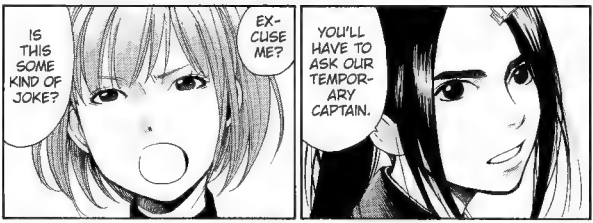
OUENDAN

ALL HE WANTS TO DO IS SLACK OFF.
WHY'S IMAMURA GET TO BE CAPTAIN? YOU SHOULD'VE MADE ME CAPTAIN!
ARE WE REALLY GONNA TAKE THE DAY OFF LIKE IMAMURA SAID?


STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
COME AGAIN?
ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, THIS WON'T JUST BE A DAY OFF.
BESIDES...
I WANTED TO SEE WHAT HAPPENED IF I HAD A LITTLE FAITH IN HIM.

STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
HERE SHE IS.
UM, USAMI-SAN?
CARE TO EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED TO OUR PLANS FOR ANOTHER INTERCLUB TRAINING SESSION TODAY?!
KANDE

ARE WE GONNA PRACTICE TOGETHER OR NOT?
ARE YOU EVEN LISTENING TO ME?
IT WOULD BE NICE IF YOU GAVE US SOME ADVANCE NOTICE, DON'T YOU THINK? THE CHEERLEADING CLUB'S SCHEDULE ISN'T EXACTLY WIDE OPEN.


IS THIS SOME KIND OF JOKE?
EXCUSE ME?
YOU'LL HAVE TO ASK OUR TEMPORARY CAPTAIN.

HUH?
FLINCH
CAPTAIN!
YOU'RE BEING CALLED, CAPTAIN IMAMURA.
I-I WASN'T TRYING TO RUN AWAY!
RATTLE
PEEK
MPORA
APTAI
ROO

WE HAVE PRACTICE WITH THE CHEER-LEADERS TODAY?!
WHAT ?!
YOU'RE MAKING HIM SUBSTITUTE CAPTAIN AGAIN? WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?
This better not be a prank
I MEAN, HAVE YOU IMPROVED AT ALL?
WOULD IT BE ASKING TOO MUCH TO HOPE THAT YOU ACTUALLY KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING, THIS TIME?
GLARE
UGH...
NO, I HAVEN'T REALLY IMPROVED MUCH...
CAP-TAIN!
WHAT THE HELL? THIS IS RIDIC-ULOUS!

I KNOW YOU CAN DO THIS, IMA-MURA, SO JUST DO IT!
DON'T START HAVING FAITH IN ME OUT OF NO-WHERE! IT'S WEIRD!
I KNEW HE LIKED THE CAPTAIN.
SOUNDS LIKE HE WAS JUST TALKING OUT HIS ASS ABOUT CHANGING THE OUENDAN.
COULD YOU DROP THAT AL-READY ?!

SNICKER SNICKER
WHISPER WHISPER
SQUEEE
So it's true...
Ooooh!
KANAN

LISTEN UP!
YOU GUYS PRACTICE, AND I'LL WATCH!
THAT'S AN ORDER!
WELL ?!
OSU!
COME ON!
WHAT DO YOU THINK IS GONNA HAPPEN?

I LOOK FORWARD ...
...TO SEEING YOUR CHEERING, CAPTAIN IMAMURA.
DON'T.
NO.
I'M NOT USED TO PEOPLE HAVING HOPE IN ME!

30. TRUST BOMB

SO YOU MADE HIM CAPTAIN FOR THE DAY? WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO PULL, USAMI-SAN?
KANAN
LIKE, ARE YOU HIGH? YOU'RE JUST GONNA DO WHATEVER HE SAYS ALL DAY?
DON'T WORRY.
CAPTAIN IMAMURA'S GOING TO SHOW US A NEW WAY TO CHEER!
THAT'S WHY I ARRANGED FOR US TO HAVE THIS INTERCLUB TRAINING SESSION. IF ANYONE CAN DO IT, HE CAN.
F-WISH
WE SHOULD ALL HAVE HIGH HOPES FOR THE NEW CAPTAIN!
YOU'RE JUST GONNA PUT ME ON THE SPOT LIKE THAT?!
KANAN

HEY!
USAMI!
...
DO YOU REALLY THINK IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO PUT HIM ON THE SPOT LIKE THAT?
YOU'RE JUST SETTING HIM UP TO EXPLODE ON EVERYONE AGAIN! DON'T YOU LEARN?
IT'S TRUE THAT IMAMURA HAS A SHORT FUSE.
BUT WHY DO YOU THINK THAT IS?

Okay, Captain Take a seat!
Imamura-kun
IT'S BECAUSE HE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO HAVE FAITH IN HIS COMPANIONS.
HE DOESN'T TRUST US,
SO BLOWING UP IS THE ONLY WAY HE KNOWS HOW TO ASSERT HIMSELF.

I WANT TO HAVE FAITH IN HIM.
SO, I'M READY TO TAKE WHATEVER HE THROWS AT US.
...
I SEE.
HEY, THINK WE COULD GET STARTED SOMETIME TODAY?
I HOPE IMAMURA WILL UNDERSTAND WHERE USAMI'S COMING FROM...
...BUT KNOWING HIM, I REALLY DOUBT THINGS WILL GO THAT SMOOTHLY.

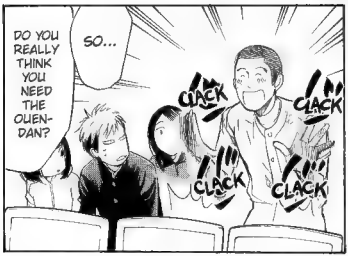
YOU'RE GONNA REGRET HAVING TRUSTED ME WHEN I'M DONE WITH YOU!
YOUR HOPES ARE JUST GONNA COME CRASHING DOWN AS QUICKLY AS THEY WENT UP.

QUIET! WE'RE STARTING NOW!
WHAT? SO YOU'RE ACTING AS CAPTAIN AFTER ALL, USAMI-SAN?
I DON'T GET WHY SHE WANTS ME TO TAKE OVER.
HOW SHOULD I KNOW?!
WHAT'S THIS NEW WAY OF CHEERING YOU'VE GOT FOR US?
HEY, CAPTAIN IMAMURA.

THE FIRST TIME AROUND, WE LOST THE SPRING PRACTICE GAME AGAINST KABOKOKU.
THAT'S TRUE.
THOSE TWO ARE ALWAYS TALKING ABOUT "THE FIRST TIME" AND "DOING THINGS OVER AGAIN."
IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE.
HMMM
IS IT SOME KIND OF SECRET CODE?
DUM
DADUM
DUM
DUM
DUM
DUM
DUM
DADUM

LET USAMI KNOW THAT.
YOU'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO BEAT US.
HOW DO WE CHEER THEM ON?
CAN A NEW WAY OF CHEERING...
...REALLY HELP OUR BASEBALL TEAM WIN?
DUM
DADUM
HOORAY!
DADUM
WHAT DO THEY NEED FROM US?
HOORAY!
MI-NA-MI!
SU-ZU-KI!
HEY, MAN.
I CAME BY TO SEE YOU PRACTICE.
GLARE
SMACK!!!
HEY!
IMAMURA!
OW!

UHH...
Y-
YEAH...
AFTER ALL, YOU DID PROMISE YOU'D BE THERE TO CHEER ME ON, IMAMURA.
I'LL MAKE SURE I'M READY IN TIME FOR THE SPRING PRACTICE GAME.
YEAH.
I'M ALREADY BACK TO PITCHING PRACTICE.
IS YOUR LEG FEELING ALL RIGHT?


SO...
DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU NEED THE OUENDAN?
CLACK
CLACK
CLACK
CLACK

I CAN'T WAIT FOR THEM TO CHEER ME ON!
DAAAMN.
DUM
DA DUM
LET'S GO!
LET'S GO!

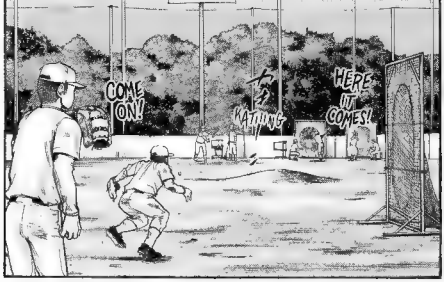
THE CROWD'S ENERGY AND THE VOLUME OF THEIR VOICES CAN CHANGE THE COURSE OF A GAME.
WELL, DUH! THE BEST HIGH-SCHOOL BASEBALL TEAMS ALWAYS HAVE GOOD OUENDAN!

BEING CHEERED ON...
...JUST FEELS REALLY GOOD.
HUH...
PEEEEEEEEE
PEEEEEEEEE
THEY DON'T GET ALONG...?
YOU COULD SAY THAT...
PERSONALLY, I'D LIKE TO SEE A LITTLE MORE PEP FROM THE PEOPLE CHEERING FOR ME.
ANYWAY, THE BASEBALL TEAM IS PRACTICING, TOO. YOU SHOULD COME WATCH A BIT, IMAMURA.
YEAH...
I'LL SWING BY LATER.
SO THAT'S IT.

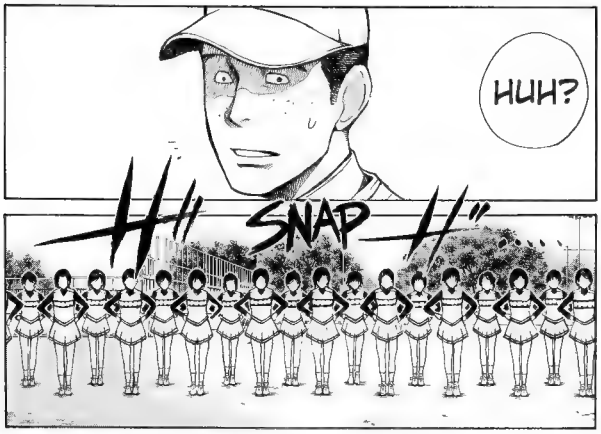
GIVE ME A BREAK!
WHAT WOULD YOU EVEN DO WITHOUT OUR NUMBERS TO BACK YOU UP?
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S ALWAYS COMPLAINING.
FLIRTY DANCING ISN'T GOING TO BRING OUR BASEBALL TEAM ANY CLOSER TO VICTORY!
YOU'VE GOTTA CHECK THAT EGO OF YOURS, LISAMI-SAN.

OKAY, TIME OUT!
CLAP
CLAP
NO MORE CAT FIGHTING!
EX-CUSE YOU!

I TRUST YOU'LL OBEY YOUR CAPTAIN'S ORDERS?
NOD
OF COURSE.
LISTEN UP.
I INTEND...
...TO MERGE THE CHEER-LEADERS AND THE OUENDAN.
PUT ME ON THE SPOT, WILL YOU?
WELL, TWO CAN PLAY AT THAT GAME.


COME ON!
KATTUNG
HERE IT COMES!

THREE HOURS LATER...
KATTUNG

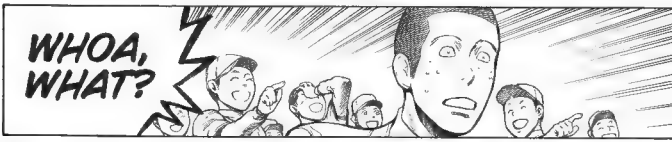

HUH?
H" SNAP H"

CHATTER
CHATTER
IMA-MURA?

WE'RE GONNA PRACTICE HERE NOW!

OKAY, EVERY-BODY!

PAANT
PAANT
KANAN
PAANT
PAANT
YEAH, WE ARE.
WE'RE REALLY DOING THIS?
YOU'RE SERI-OUS?
WELL THEN, LET'S GET IT OVER WITH.
WHAT ARE THEY DOING?
?
DUM
KANAN
FWISH


WHOA, WHAT?

TO BE CONTINUED IN VOLUME 4!

This is the AFTERWORD!

Since this manga's about going back in time from 2014 to 2011, I get anxious every time some big news event happens in the real world. I'm like, "I didn't put that in my manga!"

I don't think I'll ever forget 2011. It's been the opening of a new chapter in my life, what with Again!! beginning serialization and Moteki: Love Strikes! getting made into a movie and all.

It doesn't feel like we're too far off from catching up with Imamura in the year 2014. That sort of makes me nervous...

I think it will be pretty cool if I'm able to draw three special years of my own life at the same time as Again!!

2011.12.2[illegible]☆

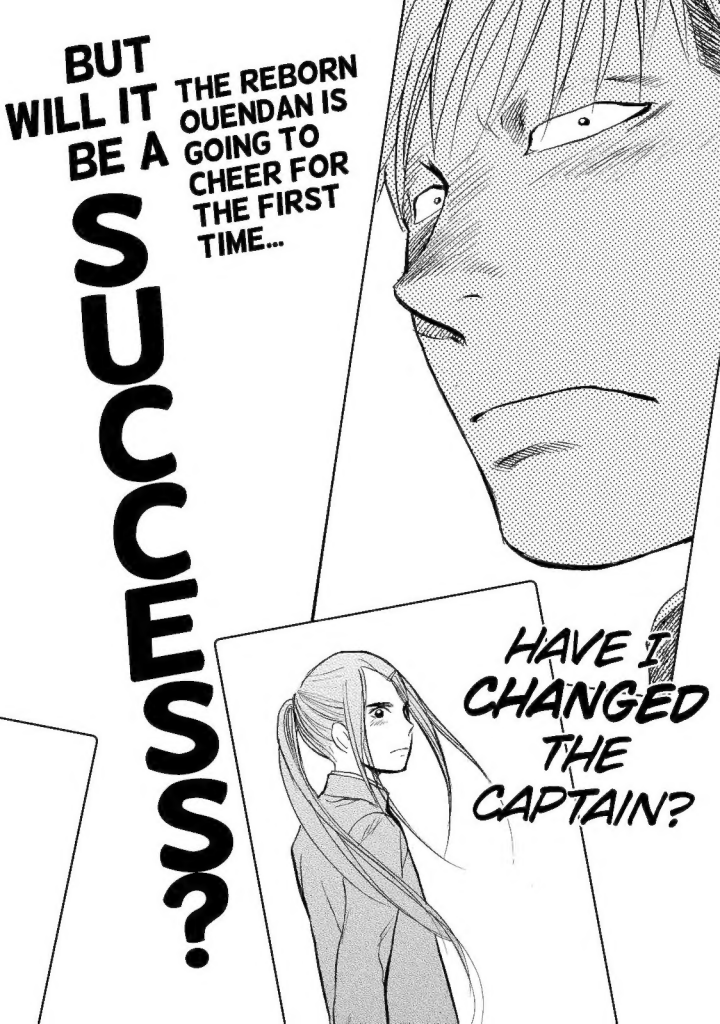
Mitsurou Kubo, December 2011

☆ My Agent: Hiromi Sakitani

☆ My Assistants: My Assistants: Shunsuke Ono, Hiromu Sugawara, Yousuke Takahashi, Yukinori Tateda, Shiori Mizoguchi, Youko Mikuni, and Four Hundred and Four Illnesses Tsunemine (a pseudonym)

THAT'S WHAT I LIKE!
I'VE WORKED MY ASS OFF TRYING TO KEEP THE OUENDAN FROM FALLING APART SO THAT I COULD SEE YOU CHEER LIKE YOU DID AT MY ENTRANCE CEREMONY AGAIN!
NO ONE CAN CONTAIN HOW THEY FEEL ANYMORE!
I'D LIKE YOU TO MATCH THIS TEMPO!
TAK
DUM
DUM TAKKA TAK
DUM TAKKA TAK
OH?
THAT WAS FAST.
Y'KNOW ...
I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO TRY SOME NEW MOVES.
WE'RE GOING TO SHOW BOTH KABOKOKU AND OUR BASEBALL TEAM THAT KANAN'S OUENDAN CAN STAND UP TO ANY CHALLENGE.
AND TO THAT END...
...WE'LL WORK TOGETHER TO CREATE A NEW WAY TO CHEER.

THE OUENDAN IS FINALLY STARTING TO COME TOGETHER...


BUT WILL IT BE A SUCCESS?
THE REBORN OUENDAN IS GOING TO CHEER FOR THE FIRST TIME...
HAVE I CHANGED THE CAPTAIN?

Again!!
アゲイン!!

Again!! 3

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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